

# COUNTRY LIFE

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SPEAIGHT.

157, New Bond Street, W.

THE COUNTESS OF RADNOR AND HER CHILDREN.



THE Journal for all interested in  
Country Life and Country Pursuits

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## FOLK MUSEUMS.

A COLLECTION of one kind and another, it may be said without fear of contradiction, is one of the most popular hobbies of the present moment. There are few people who do not indulge in it in one form or another. From postage stamps to Tudor furniture, from old engravings to sugar tongs, there is scarcely any article that the collector deems beneath his notice. And yet we are afraid there is one form of this amusement which is to a considerable extent neglected. Few of us realise the completeness of the minor changes that have taken place during the last three-quarters of a century. The impetus given to the manufacture of machinery in the early part of the nineteenth century had a momentous effect on the ordinary life of country dwelling people. The implements that had previously been used for nearly a thousand years by their progenitors suddenly became obsolete, and examples of them have now to be sought in the dust heap and the old lumber room. Our suggestion is that before it is too late those who possess articles that have gone out of use might be asked to prevent their complete destruction. It would be difficult to give even a rough list of the things referred to, but it may be interesting to enumerate a few of them. Take one example in the lines of certain poets, the flail, or as Burns called it the "weary flingin' tree," it has become absolutely obsolete, yet in many of the old barns we can see the floor on which the muscular threshers of an early day knocked out the grain with this instrument. It was in common use on nearly all the small farms of Great Britain until the nineteenth century had at least come very near its midmost point. To-day it is an object of curiosity, and will have probably become rare indeed before the end of the present century.

Now is the time, therefore, to take measures for preserving such examples of this implement as are still in existence. A great many of the other farm implements of long ago are of almost equal interest. In a Gloucestershire barn which we know it would seem that the threshers once lived inside, because the fireplace where they cooked their food is still in existence, along with their rude tongs and poker. In a corner we discovered the crook, called a swey or

a swing in the North of England, whereon the kettle used to hang. These swings have to be put out of date by the introduction of a cheap class of open ranges in the very poorest cottages, and the peasant children of the present generation can scarcely know anything about them, except by the tradition of their elders. And these times, be it noted, are not favourable for the handing down of tradition. Long ago the young people listened to their elders as they sat at the fireside, when reading was not a common accomplishment, and the expense of light and fuel demanded economy. Thus in the shadowy light of a wood fire the youngster of those days was carried back by the conversation of an earlier generation to ways and methods that had existed before he was born. But to-day an ill-lighted cottage is a rarity, and the child draws his instruction chiefly from books and school. One is continually surprised at the blank ignorance on the part of cottage children of to-day, and this ignorance undoubtedly leads to a great deal of destruction. Not long ago a friend of the writer having established a village museum wished to place in it examples of the tinder-box with the flint and steel, and the match paper used in his childhood for procuring a light. He succeeded, but it was after an amount of difficulty that can scarcely be pictured by those who realise how common, indeed how necessary, this utensil was in every household in the time of our grandfathers. So with the various means of procuring light. Candlesticks, it is true, have long been an object of the collector's fancy, and yet those in use in the cottage for holding rushlights, are by no means easily procured to-day, while the cruse, or the old-fashioned little lamp, which, at any rate, in the North of England used to be replenished with seal oil, is very difficult of recovery. One might go on to enumerate important articles of dress which the inventions of these latter days have put an end to. One has but to turn up the old pages in *Punch* to see that in the early days of Queen Victoria, or in those of King William, one went to bed with a nightcap on, while the woman without her cap or white-ironed bow above her forehead would have been considered something of a monstrosity. These devices point to a style of building that did not exclude draughts, and with the improvement of our comfort they have practically passed away.

The most anciently-dressed individual of our own acquaintance was a certain pedlar who had only one suit of clothes that very probably had been worn by his grandfather. It was of a light snuff colour, with cut-away tails, and brass buttons, while his hat—he constantly wore a tall hat, not a silk hat in the style of to-day—was made of skin that could scarcely have been beaver, since he went to very little expense in his outfit. When he was perambulating the lanes with his pack on his shoulder, and he was grown so accustomed to it that he never took it off even on a pleasure trip, as he said that without it he could not keep his balance, the farm labourers went about dressed in their smocks, which were little better than sackcloth in the case of the poorest, though much expense and embroidery were not deemed wasted in making the smock that the farmer of those days did not disdain to wear. The field labourer of to-day in the majority of cases looks as though he were wearing the cast-off clothes of a city clerk. He has his cap for every day and his felt hat for Sundays, and has long forgotten, if he ever knew, in what garb his grandfather ploughed and sowed and attended church and funeral. Our suggestion then is that it would be extremely interesting if museums were started in our more important villages, or at any rate in country centres where these relics of an age that can scarcely be called antiquity might be stored for the amusement and instruction of ages that are to come. Which of us can form a vivid imaginative picture of the farm life of say a hundred years ago, when the farmer still went to church and market with his wife riding pillion behind him, and stocks still were used in the market-place and the mounting stone was deemed an essential accessory of the church; when the corn was taken to the mill on a pack horse and the donkeys' creels carried a large proportion of the produce of the land to town? The good wife of the farm had a thousand little instruments and utensils, which now have passed out of use, some because of the change of fashion, others because of the introduction of machinery. She had lace and linen which had been spun by herself or been made in the farmhouse for the marriage of one of her ancestors. The sheets which she scented with lavender were of her own manufacture. She had a great store of curious iron for preparing the collars and linen for her personal adornment, the whole making an appearance that would look strange indeed to the smartly-attired farmer's wife of to-day, who wears nothing that has not been made by machinery.

## Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Countess of Radnor with her children. Lady Radnor is the daughter of the late Mr. C. Balfour of Newton Don, and her marriage to Lord Radnor took place in 1891.

## COUNTRY



## NOTES.

**L**ORD CARRINGTON, in the course of a debate on Monday night, on the importation of store cattle from Canada, gave one definite assurance, although in some respects his speech was rather vague. It is not the intention of the Government to bring in any Bill this session, so that the restrictions will remain in force. At the same time, he announced that the Government were following what he called "the affectionate," adopting the phrase from a singer of the later days of the Second Empire. In other words, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman wishes to see first in what direction opinion is likely to mature in the House of Commons, and he will afterwards try to give effect to it. At present sentiment is about equally divided. In Scotland, and particularly on the East Coast, there is a movement in favour of doing away with the restrictions; but in the South of England, where pedigree flocks and herds are more common and more valuable, and where at the moment store cattle are very plentiful, feeling is diametrically opposed to the change.

In the last returns of market prices issued by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries the general remark is: "Trade for cattle, from a seller's point of view, has been by no means good." At the moment graziers will not risk overstocking their pastures. In detail, we learn that at Ashford trade was slow for poor-conditioned yearlings, at Bristol some lots were left unsold, there was a better demand at Carlisle, at Corwen inferior lots were unsaleable, and at Darlington the trade was "by no means brisk"; these may be taken as fairly typical of the market reports. In Scotland, we learn that at Castle Douglas, "for inferior lots, and also for young beasts, trade was dull," at Edinburgh store cattle were plentiful and of better quality, at Perth the buyers were not keen, and at Stirling all secondary kinds were cheaper. Probably the state of the markets, as disclosed by these reports, may in some measure account for the remarks made by Earl Carrington.

The new number of the Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society is almost exclusively devoted to fruit-growing, and is well worthy of the attention of those who are interested in that subject. The area devoted to orchards and the cultivation of small fruit is a constantly-increasing one. It amounts to about one acre in a hundred in England and Wales, and somewhat less in Scotland. The cultivation of fruit has, in fact, become one of our greatest industries, and this fact has not been sufficiently recognised as yet in certain quarters. Those who are engaged as growers find, like other tillers of the soil in Great Britain, that the most serious difficulty with which they have to contend is the cheap foreign supply. Every year there is sent to England fruit to the value of £4,500,000, which can be as easily grown in this country as abroad. We leave out of account altogether such products as oranges and bananas, which the English climate will not produce. Between them these two fruits would account for other £3,500,000, so that the value of fruit imported into this country may be taken at the enormous figure of close upon £8,000,000. The question is, How much of this might be intercepted by English cultivators if they would go to work properly? That cheapness can be attained was shown by an example referred to by Sir Trevor Lawrence. He said that, when he was a boy, you could not buy a pound of Muscat grapes under 12s. or 15s., and sometimes they cost even more; now the most excellent Muscats can be got at 2s. 6d. per pound. He gave this as an instance of what can be done by hothouses in this country.

Mr. George Bunyard very clearly explained the reasons that have made foreign competition so formidable. It is still within the recollection of some that in its early stages the importation of foreign fruit was done in sailing vessels. Instead of that slow method we now have the steamship and cold storage, which enable our markets to be supplied with fruit grown in such distant lands as the Canaries, South Africa, and California. Most of us can remember when even foreign fruit had its seasons, when oranges, for instance, did not make their appearance until just before Christmas. Now nearly every kind of fruit may be had all the year round. It is evident that if our people are to hold their own with this immense and formidable competition they must study the elementary business of their calling as a business. It is necessary to select the best fruits to grow, to limit the number of kinds, to pay the utmost attention to grading and packing, and, in order that the markets should receive a regular supply, that growers should combine and organise. These are the general steps that are recommended, but for the details and particulars of the scheme it will be well for those interested to turn to the magazine itself. Nor does this exhaust the possibilities of the grower. After the market has been supplied with fresh fruit, evaporation may be brought into use, and also the art may be studied of crystallising fruits and flowers, a delicate and beautiful process which the French have carried to perfection.

Very great sympathy will be felt with the movement now on foot for the construction of an agricultural college at Cambridge. This University has always been celebrated for its scientific work, and to-day husbandry has become one of the most scientific of professions. There is scarcely any branch of it which has not undergone a change during the last half century in the shape of more scientific means of production. The machinery employed has engaged the genius of inventors and engineers until it has been raised to such a point that there is scarcely any operation which cannot be performed by machinery. From planting potatoes to milking cows, from ploughing the soil to reaping the harvest, every process has been rendered more independent of labour. Again, the work of tillage and manuring has approximated more nearly to exactitude owing to a careful study of the sciences of chemistry and bacteriology. To equip a young man in order that he may fill his place worthily among the competitors to be met with in this branch of activity, scientific training is absolutely necessary, and Cambridge is doing well to join in with the general movement. Already we understand that £9,000 has been promised, and we may fairly hope that little difficulty will be experienced in raising whatever funds may be required.

## A WELCOME.

Whence, and what art thou, babe,  
Frail little waif,  
Here at thy mother's heart  
Anchored so safe?  
Some little castaway  
Aimlessly thrown  
On to these shores of Time  
From the unknown?  
Some little winged thing  
Drawn to the light  
Of a harsh glaring world  
Out of the night?  
Some little flower, sweet  
Mystery of May,  
Here in Life's wilderness  
Peeping to-day?  
Nay, little wanderer,  
Be not afraid,  
Love's gift to love art thou,  
God sent thee, maid.

W. GILCHRIST WILSON.

The enquiry into the advisability of a Board of Conservancy for the Test and Itchen has now been held, and if the evidence given at it is studied it will be at once apparent how valuable are trout-fishing rights on the best of our Southern chalk streams. Take the case of a gentleman mentioned by a witness, who has just taken a fourteen years lease of two and a-half miles of the Test at a rent of £450, the lessee paying all rates and expenses and doing the restocking. It will be fair to estimate these additional expenses at not less than £130 (possibly much more), which makes a total of £580. The fishing will thus be responsible for giving steady employment to a keeper and odd jobs to the carpenter, and extra hands when netting has to be done. A demand for quarters in the neighbourhood is at once established, whether in the shape of lodgings or a residence, and for all this expenditure and the resulting benefit to the district, *Salmo fario* is the one and only cause.



Until the world began to play golf so assiduously as it does now it was hardly aware of the perpetual warfare between land and sea which is going on all round our coasts, with gains now to the one element and now to the other; but since golf has brought such numbers of people, sometimes with a very lively interest in the fortunes of that battle, to pursue golf balls along the shores of England, the warfare is waged before the eyes of many spectators. We know very well that several towns now well inland were among the Cinque Ports, and therefore, within quite a short space of time, beside the sea. Of such is Sandwich, from the links of which the sea continues to recede, leaving a strip of land about the ownership of which there is some little present trouble. Winchelsea and Rye are somewhat "in the same boat," as it were—boats stranded far inland. But here we are told that the sea shows some sign of regaining its former dominions right up to the hills on which these two little towns are so prettily placed; so perhaps some day all will be again as of yore when the famous "Mermaid" was an appropriate name for an inn in a town which was almost amphibious. The heaviest, most constant and unredeemed losses are those which the land suffers where, as on our East Coast, it goes precipitously down, in the form of seaward cliffs. There, with the land springs boring it above and the sea digging caves in it below, it crumbles with a far quicker rate of loss than it suffers on any comparatively flat shore.

It appears, and it is really very intelligible, that the attacks of the sea are very much less dangerous to anything like a level shore, when they are in the nature of a direct frontal attack, than when they are delivered in a lateral direction. The wave which comes directly on a level shore probably brings up as much as it takes away, but where there is a strong littoral current tending in one direction more constantly than the other, the erosion is perpetual. A singular instance of this is shown rather strikingly in the neighbourhood of Littlestone, where the shore lies flat on the east of Dungeness. At Dungeness Point itself the land is gaining on the sea, so that the point is pushing its nose further and further into the sea. But one effect of this, according to the scientific, and also to the unscientific, observer, is that the sea comes along towards the east, round the nose of the point, with a constantly increasing swirl, so that it goes in scooping round all the bay on the shores of which Littlestone lies, threatening with destruction the houses and the golf links, and compelling the people who live, work, or play there to be at great expense in the building of sea-defences, which the prophets of evil say are doomed to be eaten by the ocean. For those who have no personal or financial concern in the matter the spectacle is still an interesting one.

Lovers of the country will be specially interested in the Advertisements Regulation Bill, which has been introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Hart-Davies, and backed by Mr. George Wyndham and Sir Edward Clarke and other equally influential members of Parliament. It was brought into the House of Lords last year by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and passed its third reading, and there is little difference between the measure as it now stands and as it was when introduced to their Lordships' notice by Lord Balfour of Burleigh. The chief provision is one imposing restrictions in regard to the use of such advertisements as are likely to deface public parks and open spaces, and it refers specifically to advertisements that "might disfigure the natural beauties of the landscape." The meaning of this is that it would abolish those eyesores purporting to set forth the merits of medicines and soaps that so often disfigure the loveliest bits of the English landscape. As the Bill has met with the approval of those practically interested in such advertisements, it is difficult to see where opposition is likely to come from, and one may fairly hope that, with a little amount of luck, it will find its way into the Statute Book before the session is over.

A curious sidelight was thrown the other day over the distribution of wealth in England by Sir Henry Primrose. He had been called to give evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed to consider the income-tax. He took the whole number of those who paid this impost at about a million, of whom a quarter have incomes of over £700 a year. This figure he raised to 700,000, by including people who lived over their shops, and had a very good business, and those who lived in private hotels. Only about 6,500 persons enjoyed incomes ranging between £5,000 and £10,000, and 10,000 people are assessed on what may be called large incomes. Brought down to this bald statement of facts, it will be seen that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has before him a difficult problem to solve when he wishes to introduce a graduated income-tax. Sir Henry Primrose is of the opinion that a special staff of surveyors would be needed to scrutinise the returns, and that they would require very drastic powers. In answer to a question, he gave it as his opinion that he did not suppose that

the scrutiny would be popular. It is, of course, a well-founded objection against the income-tax that it can only be collected by a system of inquisition, to which the most serious objections can be taken. Indirect taxation is paid without any enquiry whatever into the source of income, but in the case of income-tax searching questions have to be asked and answered into what a man may very properly consider his own private business. Were these methods applied to the large masses of the population instead of to a comparatively small class they would quickly cause a revolt that would make the Chancellor of the Exchequer set his wits to work for the purpose of devising a more agreeable method of raising the revenue.

Lord Crawford must have had a very lively cruise in the Valhalla. He was accompanied by Mr. Meade-Waldo, the well-known naturalist. The party was successful in obtaining many valuable specimens. In the course of the cruise Las Palmas, Bahia, South Trinidad, Tristan d'Acunha, the neighbouring islands, and Cape Town were all visited. One result is that thirty-four birds, representing sixteen species, have been presented to the Zoological Society; five are certainly new to the collection, and these may possibly receive an addition from two examples of a rail that has not yet been identified. The black hang-nest, the thrush-like bulbul, Bocage's red-eyed dove from Dongola, Cholmley's rock partridge, and two sacred ibises form part of the collection. In addition to the birds, a number of leaf insects were collected. Altogether a very important addition has been made to the natural history of the country.

#### GORSE.

O flaming gorse, O golden-budded whin!  
All day thy incense in the sunshine spills  
And all the quivering air about thee fills  
With dreamy fragrance. From thy yellow lips  
Clear dew as sweet as honey slowly slips—  
All thy green spears prick forward russet tips.  
The lark hath changed thy perfume into song  
And pipes thy golden music all day long,  
O fiery furze, O golden-blossomed whin!

AGNES BLUNDELL.

For more than twelve months the Fish Gallery of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington has been closed to the public, in order that it might be thoroughly overhauled and brought up to modern museum requirements. One-half of this gallery has now been thrown open, revealing a transformation that should thoroughly satisfy those who have, from time to time, expressed impatience at what they regarded as needless delay in this work of renovation. The old parchment effigies are gone, and in their place will be found a really marvellous collection, displaying all the hues of the rainbow. Few people, probably, except fishermen, ever realise that fishes are among the most brilliantly coloured of animals; and even fishermen will, we suspect, in many cases, find surprises in some of the bizarre examples here exhibited. Grotesquely shaped, and no less grotesquely coloured, they form a wonderful object-lesson in evolution. In addition to these marvels there will be found some enormous specimens of sharks and skate, as well as some of the more remarkable deep-sea fishes. The method of mounting now adopted in the wall cases differs completely from the old style, inasmuch as the specimens are now placed against a delicate sea-green background instead of being hoisted up on spikes, so that the effect, from an artistic point of view, is most pleasing. Pithily-worded labels again are among the new features. From these may be gathered a vast amount of information as to the relationships of the various types to one another, their geographical distribution, and so on.

An announcement in the daily Press to the effect that Captain Boyd-Alexander has succeeded in securing another example of the okapi for the Natural History Museum is a most welcome piece of news. But, so far, no details have come to hand as to the sex of this animal, or as to whether it is horned or not. When the original specimen was procured, it will be remembered that this remarkable beast was supposed to be hornless, and, therein, differed from the giraffe, to which, as Professor Ray Lankester pointed out, this curious creature was very nearly allied. Before his monograph was completed, however, the agents of the Belgian Government succeeded in procuring another specimen, which, possessing large horns, showed either that the original example was immature, or belonged to a different species. The horns of this Belgian example differed from those of true giraffes, in that the tips thereof would appear to have protruded beyond the hairy investing skin, inasmuch as these tips were polished. Further light on this subject may be forthcoming in Captain Boyd Alexander's specimen.



## FARMING AND CAPITAL.



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

MAKING TRENCHES FOR POTATOES.

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THE present moment would seem to be a very favourable one for making a sober enquiry as to the outlook in farming. A contributor in another part of the paper deals with one side of the question, but the point he raises has no particular reference to the existing condition of things. It is one of those problems that are always with us. In farming, as in every other industry, there are men who make the best bargain they can without pretending to be quite frank, while there are others with equally valuable goods to sell who assert that they are placed at a disadvantage by their honesty. In the end, frankness is sure to be the best course, because, as a rule, farmers do not deal with only casual purchasers, and they can have no more valuable asset than a reputation for honesty. If it is known that they refuse to sell anything under false pretences, the purchaser gains a confidence that he would not otherwise have, while he who wins a temporary advantage by sharp practices is tolerably certain to lose in the long run. But, as we have said, this is a matter incidental to all trading, and belonging to no particular time. The most important question is how far is agriculture reviving at the present moment. A few days ago the present writer was talking to the agent of one of the largest landowners in the country upon this very point. It arose from a discussion as to the various means that had been adopted when agricultural depression was at its worst. There were the proverbial three courses open to the landowner. The first and most obvious was to reduce the rents, and probably in a large majority of cases this was actually done. But in the

result it has not proved the best course, because when rents have once been reduced it is very difficult to raise them again. The second course was followed on several small estates known to us. When the landowner received a reasonable complaint from his tenant, he said, "Well, I do not like to reduce your rent, but there are many things on the farm that want doing. I will see to them, and so save you money in that way." Accordingly he laid out

his capital in draining, in fencing, in improving buildings, in short, in any way that seemed to offer a fair prospect of allowing the farmer to make a profit. This plan succeeded in many cases, and the landowner is now reaping the benefit. It was obligatory on him to lay out a certain amount of capital at the time, but he obtained his return by avoiding a lowering of his income. The third course was, when farmers found themselves, owing to the state of affairs, unable to continue paying rent, to take the land in hand and to cultivate it more or less as a home farm. This is, or was, done on the estate to which reference has been made. It meant a good deal of risk, as some 6,000 acres had to be treated in this way, but during the present year there has been a change in the right direction. There are far more applicants for holdings, and in consequence three large farms, which have not had a tenant since the middle of the eighties, are now let to good men. But what the agent dwelt upon was the shyness of capital. He considers that the prospects of agriculture are better at the present time than they have been for some time past, and the reasons are fairly obvious. Some years ago the price of wheat took an upward



C. Reid.

DOLING OUT THE "SETS,"

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turn, and since then it has remained continuously at or about 30s. a quarter. Twenty years ago this would not have been considered a remunerative price, but owing to a variety of causes that need not be enumerated now, though the chief one is the extended use of labour-saving machinery, it is possible to produce wheat more economically, and at least there is no loss on the present price, whereas during the years when it fell to 25s. and 26s. there was

a very decided loss. In the second place, sheep-farming has become very remunerative. It is true that during the present season lambs have not, as a rule, done well. The changeability of the weather accounts for a more than average percentage of deaths among them, and this, of course, means direct loss to the flock-master. But, on the other hand, the price of mutton has kept up very well; why, no one is able exactly to say, because at a first glance it would appear that the enormous importation of chilled and frozen meat ought to bring down the prices. For the best quality of mutton, however, it has not done so, and along with the good prices of meat there has been a greatly enhanced value of wool, the origin of which is traceable to the drought in Australia and the consequent diminution of the supply sent thence to this country. Beef, too, has kept up very well in price, and so has bacon. Thus the main sources of income from farming are now in a more satisfactory condition. Still, there is not such a revival as would tempt a very large number of men with capital at their disposal to enter into the business. Generally speaking, the amount of capital required for farming is £10 an acre. The figure, of course, is not absolute. On large farms of light land it would be less, and on small holdings which lend themselves to intensive cultivation it would naturally be a little greater. But on the particular estate to which we have alluded between £4,000 and £5,000 would be required by an entering tenant who wished to give himself and the farm a fair chance. Now those who

possess this amount of money still regard it as too much of a risk to put it into land, and there is very great difficulty in obtaining this class of tenant. On the other hand, an argument for small holdings can easily be drawn from this. A man who has from £400 to £800 to invest in land, very often at the same time has in his own family a great part of the working power. If his sons are not above labour in the fields, and his daughters not so enamoured of the piano that they will attend to the dairy and the poultry, a

very great saving is effected. Not only is the labour bill saved at home, but it is found by experience that the work of those who are engaged from the outside is always better done when the labourer is working side by side with, or under the surveillance of, a member of the family. The consequence is that there is a very considerable demand, quite apart from that which we usually call the demand for small holdings, for farms of moderate size. Nor do the would-be tenants expect to get them, as they would have done ten years ago, at a merely nominal rent. Apparently they see their way to earn a livelihood, because very few such holdings as we have described go a-begging nowadays. Moreover, land itself has ceased to be the drug in the market that it was during the worst days of the depression. In other words, one has to seek far and long to obtain the bargains in land that used to be so common. If any of it is sold for a very low price, it may be taken for granted that it is practically barren and unproductive. Good, cultivable soil can no longer be had for a song. The question then resolves itself into whether or no this state of affairs is likely to be permanent. Our own idea is that the revival, though it may move very slowly, is fairly well assured. The stock-keeper, at all events, has not suffered much in the past, and we can see no reason for surmising that he will do so in the future. Importers of frozen and chilled meat for a time sold at ruinously low prices, but for the sake of their own profits they have had to discontinue this, and,



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BETWEEN LINES OF TREES.

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PLOUGHING THEM IN.

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though they command a large sale, they do not yet show any likelihood of competing, so far as quality is concerned, with first-class home-grown meat. No one with whom we have spoken, who is at all qualified to give an opinion, believes that the price of cereals is likely to go down to any great extent. In the United States fruit-farming is offering so profitable a form of agriculture that as soon as wheat threatens to go down below a certain point, holders of land will immediately turn their attention to it. Even in Canada, whose future appears to be illimitable, there is very little disposition to accept the prices which ruled ten or fifteen years ago. Nor is there any other source of supply in the world where excessive cheapness of production is likely to be maintained. On the other hand, population continues to increase, so that the home consumer in every country is multiplied, while the amount of virgin land that can be laid down to wheat has come within very measurable limits indeed. Thus, although there is no immediate prospect of wheat going up to famine prices, there is still less chance of it coming down to the extent of which we had experience in 1894, 1895, and 1896. At the moment, too, there is a better prospect for the sale of hay and wool than there has been for some time back. During the last three or four years the food stocks never have been exceeded in the winter, with the result that very high prices have not been obtainable, but the character of the present spring has produced an entire revolution in this respect. On very few farms indeed is there any winter food left, while it

The human mind is so diverse in itself, and so varied in its manifestations, that the tests applied to the latter continually vary. Yet in one way criticism may be scientific. It is generally conceded that whatever proceeded from a man in the shape of art must have entered as experience, however much that experience may have been reshaped and blended. As a result it becomes evident that there must be a correspondence and harmony between a man's life and his work. We assume the latter to be sincere, as otherwise it could not be fairly classified as art. In this childhood must be of the first importance. "As the twig is bent the trees incline," and the most abiding impressions are those made on the plastic mind of youth. For this reason the first volume of *Leo Tolstoy, His Life and Work* (Heinemann) will repay close study, as it deals with the childhood and early manhood of the great Russian *litterateur*. The book is a translation from the work of Paul Birukoff, and was originally written with the authority and help of Count Leo Tolstoy and the Countess. The ell of pedigree which opens the book traces Count Tolstoy's origin to Indris, who in 1353 came to Tchernigof with his sons and a retinue of 3,000 men. The novelist has supplied reminiscences of his patient grandmother in the following graphic passage:

My earliest reminiscences of my grandmother, before our removal to Moscow and our life there, amount to three strong impressions concerning her. One was how my grandmother washed, and with some kind of special soap produced on her hands wonderful bubbles, which, so it seemed to me,



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

WITH THEIR HEADS SET FOR HOME.

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is not too soon to say already that there is very little chance of a luxuriant hay crop this year. It has been freely prophesied by those who are in the best position to know that by next Christmas the price of hay will have reached a point higher than it has been during the last five or six years. On a fair review of the situation, however, we cannot be far wrong in arriving at the conclusion that barring any incidental eccentricities of the weather, which is always capable of reducing such forecasts to dust and ashes, there is a distinct promise of revival in the fortunes of agriculture, and solid reason for investing capital in this industry. It has to be remembered that there are several causes operating to send up the price of English land. There is the natural and steady increase of population, and the large towns are not only extending their area, but sending out individuals who, preferring to live in the country, are steadily withdrawing land from the processes of agriculture.

## A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

SOME years ago there used to be considerable talk of what was called scientific criticism. It was conducted by those who seemed to think that there existed certain absolute standards of criticism, and that Mr. Herbert Spencer's style was the one most appropriate to the discussion of these matters. "Aristotle and His Philosophy" thus reappeared under a new mask. The idea did not take hold.

she alone could produce. We used to be purposely brought to her—probably our delight and wonder at her soap bubbles amused her—in order to see how she washed. I remember the white jacket, petticoat, white aged hands, and the enormous bubbles rising on them, and her satisfied, smiling, white face.

His mother seems to have been a particularly fine and pure woman, but she died in his infancy. Of his father, too, his recollections are pleasant, and it must be said that his ancestry is one to be envied. Concerning his childhood, spent in a remote country village, an account is given which to us is simply incredible. We quote these reminiscences as they stand:

Here are my first reminiscences, which I am unable to arrange in order, not knowing what came before and what after; of some of them I do not even know whether they happened in reality or in a dream. Here they are: I am bound; I wish to free my arms and I cannot do it and I scream and cry, and my cries are unpleasant to myself, but I cannot cease. Somebody bends over me, I do not remember who. All is in half light. But I remember that there are two people. My cries affect them; they are disturbed by my cries, but do not unbind me as I desire, and I cry yet louder. They think that this is necessary (*i.e.*, that I should be bound), whereas I know it is not necessary and I wish to prove it to them, and am convulsed with cries, distasteful to myself but unrestrainable. I feel the injustice and cruelty, not of human beings, for they pity me, but of fate, and I feel pity for myself. I do not and never shall know what it was, whether I was swathed when a babe at the breast and tried to get my arm free, or whether I was swathed when more than a year old in order that I should not scratch myself; or whether, as it happens in dreams, I have collected into this one reminiscence many



impressions; but certain it is that this was my first and most powerful impression in life. Nor is it my cries that are impressed upon my mind, nor my sufferings, but the complexity and contrast of the impression. I desire freedom, it interferes with no one else, and I, who require strength, am weak, whilst they are strong. Another impression is a joyful one. I am sitting in a wooden trough, and am enveloped by the new and not unpleasant smell of some kind of stuff with which my little body is being rubbed. It was probably bran, but the novelty of the impression from the bran aroused me, and for the first time I remarked and liked my little body with the ribs showing on the breast, and the smooth, dark-coloured trough, my nurse's rolled-up sleeves and the warm steaming bran-water, and its sound, and especially the feeling of the smoothness of the trough's edges when I passed my little hands along them.

It is strange and dreadful to think that from my birth until the age of three years, during the time when I was fed from the breast, when I was weaned, when I began to crawl, to walk, to speak, however I may seek them in my memory, I can find no other impressions save these two.

It seems to us that these are "reminiscences" born of a too lively imagination. The prodigy who began to reflect before three, and remembered his reflection, belongs to a class that Uncle Toby demolished with a single killing phrase. And, whether such memories were real or imaginary, it is to be doubted if they have any biographical value. All, or nearly all, Tolstoy's reminiscences of childhood are too full of sentimentality to suit the English taste. Take this about his aunt:

I had fits of passionately tender love for her.

I remember how once on the sofa in the drawing-room, when I was about five, I squeezed in behind her, and she caressingly touched me with her hand. I caught this hand and began to kiss it and to cry from tender love towards her.

If an English boy were to be so far left as to do this he would never mention it again. Indeed, we miss sadly the bird-nesting, the cricket, and other outdoor pastimes without which an English boy's education is never complete.

But the same self-consciousness and self-analysis that seem so unnatural in a mere baby lead to a valuable frankness when riper years are attained. Tolstoy has divined that the record of those characters of cloistered and unspotted virtue must be, in nine cases out of ten, as false as they are uninteresting. The literary temperament, especially the modern literary temperament, is one of unbounded extremes, headlong alike in virtue and in folly. No history of it can be sincere that does not show this, and so, though with not the best grace in the world, Count Tolstoy enters the confessional. One of his earliest ambitions was to be a dandy, or, as he puts it, *comme il faut*:

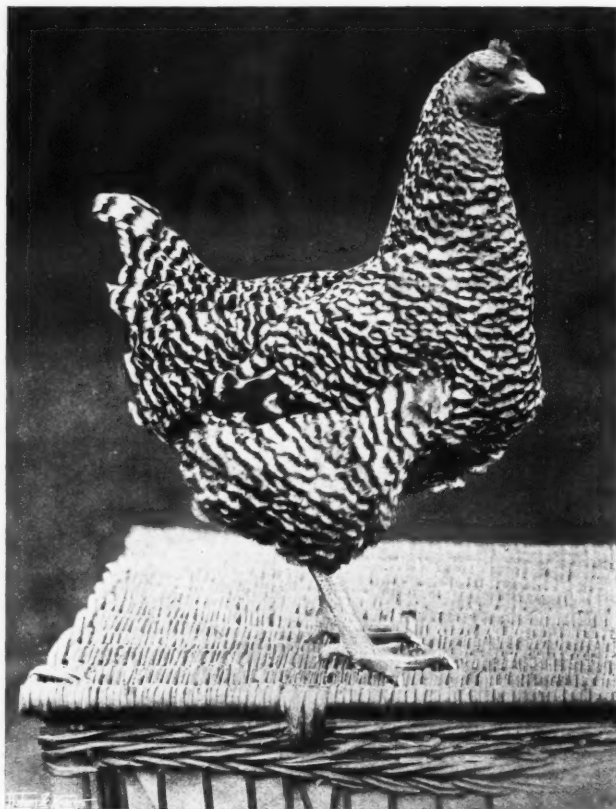
My *comme il faut* consisted, first and foremost, in the use of excellent French, more especially in pronunciation. A man who pronounced French badly immediately provoked a feeling of hatred in me. "Why do you attempt to speak as we do if you do not know?" I asked him mentally, with a venomous smile. The second condition for *comme il faut* consisted in long, manicured, and clean nails. The third was the ability to curtsy, dance, and converse. The fourth, and this was very important, was an indifference to everything, and a constant expression of a certain elegant, supercilious ennui.

*Wein, Weib und gesang* claimed him as their own, as, like our own poet Burns, impulse drove him "passion's devious ways." On looking back from the summit of old age he gives the following account of his youth:

I put men to death in war, I fought duels to slay others, I lost at cards, wasted the substance wrung from the sweat of peasants, punished the latter cruelly, rioted with loose women, and deceived men. Lying, robbery, adultery of all kinds, drunkenness, violence, and murder, all were committed by me, not one crime omitted, and yet I was none the less considered by my equals to be a comparatively moral man. Such was my life for ten years.

Women especially appeared to have had a hold upon him that it was difficult to throw off, and the history of his love affairs bears some resemblance to that of Goethe. Nor do we feel convinced by the eloquence of his very devout admirer that Tolstoy was not, like Carlyle, "gey ill to live with." Many of his acts strike us as being aggressive to the point of boorishness, and he evidently grew up self-centred and rough in manners. Yet amid all this, fine ambition and austere resolution were being formed. Tolstoy was no inheritor of a saintly freedom from vice, but his greatness was developed out of the weaknesses as well as the heroism of humanity. As we read our wonder rises that so great a man could have appeared amid the imperfect Russian civilisation of the nineteenth century. The whole atmosphere disclosed by this book is altogether different from that which would have surrounded a similar character in France or England. The soldiers with whom he fought through more than one campaign, including the Crimea, are gallant, but it is with a strange gallantry. Of the English, he says, "they are a splendid people," and even the Cossacks "feel pity in sabreing them," while by their side "you should see one of our riflemen, small, lousy, shrivelled up in a way." All the more praise was due to the latter for their heroism. How the character of Tolstoy was developed under the conditions here described will be best told, perhaps, when we come to deal with the remainder of this work, whose publication will, we hope, not long be delayed.

## THE UTILITY POULTRY LAYING COMPETITION.



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A PEDIGREE LAYER. "COUNTRY LIFE."

JUST nine years ago the Utility Poultry Club started laying competitions for the purpose of showing that fowls can be made to lay steadily through the winter months if hatched at the right time and fed and housed in the right way. The idea, which was adopted from the United States, caught on at once, though for several years the competition was but a small one, nor were the results in any way remarkable. But the test is now carried out on a fairly large scale, and the whole poultry world follows it with keen interest, and what is more to the point, the results are better each time. The competition is confined to birds of the year, and begins in October, when spring-hatched pullets ought to be commencing to lay. It lasts for a period of sixteen weeks, generally ending about the end of January. It includes, it will be seen, the three worst months of the year for eggs, and so forms a thorough test of the birds' capacity for producing winter eggs.

To come to particulars, the competition under review began on October 16th and ended on February 4th, and consisted of thirty-six pens of four pullets, which were domiciled in twelve large grass runs and provided with open-front sleeping-houses. Combining three pens in one run saved much labour, and by the use of the trap nest not only was the danger of crediting an egg to the wrong pen obviated, but the individual score of each pullet could be taken. All poultry-keepers are, of course, familiar with that useful aid to the production of "pedigree layers," the trap nest; but for non-poultry-keepers I may explain that the trap nest is a little invention to distinguish good from bad layers. The nest has a concealed shutter, worked by a spring which the fowl unwittingly treads on as she enters; it falls and shuts her in, and release is only possible by aid of the owner, who, when releasing the hen and collecting the egg, credits it to the producer. Each hen is numbered, and, as the nests are examined frequently, so as to release the layer as soon as possible, there is no difficulty in accurately assigning each egg to the pullet which laid it. As might be expected, variations were extreme; two birds never troubled the Manageress to record their scores at all, and a round O had to be set against their numbers; two others laid but five and seven eggs respectively; but the top score was no less than 75 laid by hen number 106, one of the Buff Orpingtons which earned third prize for their owner. When we consider that these variations occurred among 144 pullets, supposed one and all to be picked birds, the value of the trap nest in distinguishing good from bad layers is very clear.

In the aggregate 5,401 eggs were laid, which gives a record of 150 eggs per pen, which compares favourably with 140, the

score of last year, then the best on record; the full scores of the first three pens may be of interest.

		No. of Eggs.	P. ints.
1st Prize (White Leghorns).	Winner, Mr. R. R.		
	Trendell—61, 66, 63, 61 ... ..	251	500
2nd Prize (Buff Orpingtons).	Winner, Mr. A. W.		
	Long—68, 67, 62, 39 ... ..	236	468
3rd Prize (Buff Orpingtons).	Winner, Mr. W.		
	Reynolds—39, 75, 61, 60 ... ..	235	441

Two points were given for each egg scaling 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. and over, and one for all under that weight; thus it will be seen that the third prize winner, beaten apparently by one egg, really lost the second prize by 27 points. It will also be seen that Mr. Trendell won owing to the uniform productiveness of his four pullets; none laid remarkably well, but all laid consistently. There were better layers in the next two pens, but in each case one poor layer pulled down the average. In the first case the bird was slow to begin, in the second she began well and then went broody, following the broody fit by moulting.

No less than twenty-two of the competing pullets went into moult, and five went broody. "The question of moulting," says the report, "is a most aggravating one, for good chances have been lost entirely by it in several instances." Unfortunately, there is no cure; but there is little doubt the generous feeding the birds got had something to do with the prevalence of this occurrence. The birds were almost all February and March hatched, and should not, in the ordinary course, and especially considering the lateness of the season, have moulted till the following autumn.

The question arises, Were not the birds overfed? Each got 4oz. of food daily, weighed dry, for the first two and a-half months, and after that date 3oz. The breakfast consisted of 1oz. of soft food, containing equal parts of chopped green food, meat (either in the form of greaves or cut raw bone), and meal. With regard to the latter, barley meal, thirds, pea meal, and a little linseed meal were given. Sometimes steamed cut clover was served instead of the chopped greenstuff, and occasionally a little salt was added. At midday there was a scanty meal of corn given, and in the evening a good feed of grain, wheat, oats, and barley. No spices or condiments were given, but the allowance of meat, the reader will see, was fairly generous.

It is well known that in the past all attempts at egg-farming on a big scale have failed, for the simple reason that, in those cases where no disease killed off the birds, not enough eggs were produced to pay the expenses of rent, management, and labour. The average egg production would fall below 100 a year. In the competition now closed, thirty-two birds each laid fifty eggs and over during the sixteen worst weeks of the year for eggs. We are, in short, evolving a new breed of fowls—champion layers, instead of champion cup-winners at shows, the said cups

awarded for purely fancy points. Selection of layers has only just begun; as it goes on, egg averages will automatically rise—in other words, we shall get more eggs from the same number of hens, and, with the steady increase of poultry-keeping which is going on, we shall in the future be less dependent on foreign imports.

CHARLES D. LESLIE.

## FROM THE FARMS.

### PERIODICITY IN THE WHEAT CROP.

IT will be remembered that, in examining the yield of wheat in this country from a meteorological point of view, the director of the Meteorological Office, Dr. W. N. Shaw, discovered that, with certain exceptions due to exceptional causes, the yield of wheat in the chief wheat-growing counties of England depended on the rainfall of the preceding autumn. Basing his prediction on the rainfall during September, October, and November of 1904, he said that the yield in 1905 for the East of England would equal 31.9 bushels per acre. The actual crop, according to the Board of Agriculture, was almost exactly identical, being 32 bushels. Upon further investigation Dr. Shaw has discovered what appears to be an absolute law of periodicity in the wheat yield. He has, in this instance, dealt with the East of England only for the twenty-one years 1885-1905, and he has found an astonishing sequence in the yield. Whenever it was below the average it was also deficient eleven years later, and whenever the yield was above the average the same rule held good. To this there was not a single exception during the whole twenty-one years examined. Taking the first year, 1885, the yield was in excess of the average, and eleven years later, in 1896, it was also above. In 1886 there was a short crop, and a like result followed in 1897; in 1887 and 1888 the yield exceeded the average, and also in 1898 and 1899. So it was all through the twenty-one years, although neither the excess nor deficit was always in the same proportion. It would be rather premature, perhaps, to assert that an absolute and unfailing law has been established, for what are called accidental coincidences sometimes play very strange pranks and mimic extraordinarily well a real law of Nature. As there is, however, no exception for the years examined, there is certainly a strong presumption that some unknown law is at work and not mere fortuity. As the yield of wheat must necessarily depend on the weather, it will probably be discovered upon further investigation that there are some features of resemblance between the climate of any given year and that eleven years previously. It will, however, be very difficult to discover, for it is certainly not a fact that the chief elements of rainfall, temperature, and sunshine, which one would naturally consider the determining factors, are repeated in the same amount or intensity during the corresponding period. According to Dr. Shaw's conclusions, the yield for the present year will be deficient, as was the case eleven years ago; what the deficiency will be he does not venture to say. But according to the less certain rule of the rainfall of the preceding autumn the crop should be in excess of the average in the East of England. It will be very interesting to see whether the so far unbroken rule of eleven years periodicity will break down this year, or whether it will be the more precarious rule of autumn rainfall which will fail.

### DOES FARMING PAY?

"How can one make money out of farming?" This question, which is heard every day, is of general interest to the whole country—especially in these days when "back to the land" is on everybody's tongue—and it is no doubt of considerable importance not only to agriculture, but to the physique of the nation, as has been set forth by Lord Grey and many others. There is money in farming even now, or farmers would not exist at all; but perhaps the chief interest of the public is as to the chances of a class not bred on the land to make a living there. One should not expect a city-bred man of, say, twenty-five to be able to succeed in a country occupation, any more than a farmer could be expected to pay his way if he started as a city merchant. People who dwell in cities notoriously have a singular contempt for their country cousins, and perhaps, therefore, look on their work as any fool's job, until they try for themselves. A country training is as necessary as office training for the average man to ensure success. What is A B C to any countryman from lifelong habit is Greek to the stranger from town, and will not become familiar without a lengthy apprenticeship. The average farmer who picks his holding well makes a very comfortable living and puts something by as well, and those above the average can make real money. There are men who pay as much as £4,000 a year rent and turn over as much as a large London shop, who farm thousands of acres, live a healthy, hard-working, out-of-door life, and have a bank balance which their landlord would probably not despise. It is not unusual to find this class of farmer north of the Tweed, or, if his abode is south of that border-line, it will generally be found that he has a Scotch accent and a liking for whisky. In fact, Scotchmen form a class by themselves



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BUFF ORPINGTON HEN. "COUNTRY LIFE."



in these islands as farmers; their canny ways and hard-headed energy seem peculiarly fitted to modern conditions of agriculture. They do not throw money away, and yet when outlay appears desirable do not shrink putting it down. There are successful up-to-date dairy farms in Essex on the old wheatland, looked on by the Saxon as hopeless till lately, and their occupiers are from the North. It is a very interesting question, and one which would well repay discussion, as to whether money is to be made by

real honest "dealing" in the same way as it is undoubtedly made by unscrupulous dealing. One often hears it said that such an occupation is not fit for a gentleman, or that a gentleman cannot make it pay. Only the other day one of London's most eminent doctors remarked that he could not make money out of his particular farming hobby, as he could not tell lies, or refrain from letting prospective customers know the faults of what he had to sell, a feeling which is apparently unknown to, and beyond the comprehension of, the born "dealer." It almost seems that the public is so accustomed to the common method that it resents the truth, or, perhaps, when a seller points out any faults in his goods, cannot believe that all is told, and concludes the damage or failings must be something far worse than that which actually is disclosed. Certainly one hesitates, as if by instinct, to believe all one is told about a horse, whoever the owner may be—more especially, perchance, when one has been in the Emerald Isle—and other dealing is, no doubt, equally fair, or otherwise. Could not some reader of this article with large experience and unprejudiced mind give an opinion on the subject of absolutely straight dealing? It certainly looks bad when people, like the doctor above mentioned, speak in the way they do; for such men are bound to be clever—in this case exceptionally capable and practical also—yet it seems they have no chance unless they do things on business lines. For the inexperienced who feel the call of the land there is no question but that they should avoid the dealing side of the life and seek some occupation where market prices rule. Market gardening, nursery work, retail dairy-farming, and such pursuits give a good prospect of a living



TWO OPERATIONS IN ONE.

to other people. Without initiative, energy and perseverance are of little value compared to fifty years ago. Competition enters everywhere, and one needs to sharpen one's intellect and keep it bright if success is to come. This is true not only in the town, but in the country as well, and the old jokes where the smart City man has the tables turned on him by the apparently slow-witted Hodge are by no means inapplicable to-day to the town-bred clerk or tradesman who looks to make a living on the land without experience or knowledge. Farming pays very well when it is properly done, either on a large or small scale, and many people are hoping (is it against hope?) that the Government will do something to encourage real country enterprise and make things easier for all the three classes indigenous to the land, and not support only the one likely to bring most cheap popularity.

COGNAC.

## THE IVEL POTATO PLANTER.

The potato hopper is attached to the framework of any ordinary two or three furrow plough. The man on the plough feeds the tube through which the potatoes pass from the hopper. The tube of the hopper sets the potatoes just behind the first breastplate of the three-furrow plough, as shown in the photograph. Running downwards from the frame of the plough is an adjustable skimmer, which makes a ridge behind the first breastplate, and the potato drops in the hollow formed by this breastplate, thus preventing the potato dropping right down to the bottom of the ordinary ploughed furrow. This mode of potato planting is done in one operation, costing no more than when ploughing alone, and the seeds are set with regularity.



Copyright.

"AND BEAUTY BORN OF MURMURING SOUND  
SHALL PASS INTO HIS FACE."

"COUNTRY LIFE."



## THE HOME LIFE OF THE MISSEL-THRUSH.

**A** PART from the inherent charm of the work, and the value for illustrative purposes of portraits of living wild birds, this branch of photography gives to the serious worker unrivalled opportunities of observing the habits of birds. The time most fruitful for both photographing and observing is the nesting season, especially after the young birds are hatched, while they are being fed by their parents. Providing the tent, or other means of concealment, is efficient, and time has been allowed for the birds to become thoroughly accustomed to its presence near the nest, and the photographer has acquired the power of remaining motionless (at first somewhat difficult to attain), and can manipulate his camera without any noise, the birds will exhibit no sign of alarm, but behave in a perfectly natural manner. Observations and photographs will thus be of far more value than if the birds are rendered uneasy through inadequate preparation or carelessness in working.

When young birds are being fed by their parents, the main points of interest to record are: the kind of food used, the frequency with which it is brought, the method of delivering it to the young, and the attention given to the sanitation of the nest. Other points are the comparison of the industry of male and female, and observation of their constancy in perching on a particular branch or part of the nest. Generally, and perhaps naturally so, the female appears to be more strongly imbued with the parental instinct, for one repeatedly notices a greater frequency of visits of the female than of the male; but to the credit of the sterner sex it must be stated that this is by no means always the case. There is no rule—it is simply a matter of individual variation of temperament. As a rule there is not much choice of position in which a bird can stand whilst feeding its young, but the constancy with which each parent will adhere to a particular position is noteworthy. I have taken several photographs representing different visits of a bird to its nest, and so exactly do they resemble each other that they might be taken for prints from one negative. When feeding their young a pair of birds visit the nest so many times in a day that it is hardly surprising that they acquire a habit of alighting on the same spot each time. I have found that the number and the frequency

time; this estimate reckons the labours of both parents. If the young birds are hungry, and generally they appear to be so, a cluster of elongated necks, crowned with widely-opened mouths, appears above the rim of the nest directly one of the old birds arrives. The food is distributed impartially; the parent, thrusting its bill well down the gaping throats, leaves in each a portion of food until the supply is



W. Farren INSISTING ON THEIR HAVING IT. Copyright.



W. Farren. THE MOTHER ARRIVES WITH DINNER. Copyright.

of visits depend to a great extent on the description of food; for instance, thrushes and blackbirds, which nearly always feed their young with worms, do not visit the nest nearly so often as birds such as flycatchers, tits, and warblers, which feed with small insects. The former class of birds visit the nest with food on an average from twelve to twenty times in an hour, while the latter may pay as many as fifty or more visits in the same

exhausted. I have occasionally seen a bird arrive with food when the young showed no signs of hunger, or were sleeping so soundly as not to notice their parent's presence; the latter has given a little chirrup or stirred up the sleepers with her bill, and occasionally, when they have been disinclined to take the food, the old bird has settled down on the nest and brooded the young for a time holding the food in her bill. As a rule, however, the young birds are either quite ready for the food as it is brought to them, or are actuated by a generous impulse not to disappoint the industry of their parents. Possibly they are unable to gauge their capacity, for often I have noticed an apparent inability to swallow, when the parent bird has either successfully readjusted the food or transferred it from one throat to another.

After delivering all the food, the parent bird makes a searching examination of the nest, and, picking up any food which may have fallen into it, eats it herself, or gives it to one of the young ones, thus removing all excretory matter. This, however, almost invariably is voided by the young birds while the parent is at the nest; the latter takes it as voided in her bill, and either swallows it or carries it away. Thrushes and blackbirds, in my own experience, always swallow the excretory matter; I have never witnessed a single instance of its being carried away by one of these birds. Certain of the warblers, such as the duncock or hedge-sparrow and the common and lesser white-throats, dispose of it in both ways; while tits of various species—the flycatcher, the tree-pipit, the chaffinch, the wren, the stonechat, and the wheatear—always, so far as I have seen, carry it away.

The first record within my knowledge of a bird swallowing the excreta of its young was in the *Zoologist*. The recorder had from the window of his house watched a missel-thrush feeding its young in an adjacent tree, and was quite convinced that the excreta were swallowed. This aroused some controversy. The general opinion—which, I confess, I shared at the time—was that the observer was mistaken, and that the excreta were carried away and dropped. I thought no more of the matter

until one morning, four years ago, I was for the first time photographing a song-thrush whilst feeding her brood. I was concealed in a tent within 6ft. of the nest, and could see quite plainly all that took place, and to my great surprise beheld the thrush at each visit to the nest take up the excreta as voided and swallow them. On more than one occasion excreta were taken from two or three of the young birds at a visit. No soiling of the bird's bill takes place, as the excreta when voided are contained, as it were, in gelatinous sacs.

The nest of the missel-thrush is usually placed on one of the highest main branches of a tree, and although generally the branches are of sufficient strength for a camera to be fixed so that a photograph may be taken of the nest and eggs, it is rare to find a nest so low as to be within range of a tent on the ground from which it would be possible to photograph the birds.

In April, 1904, I was fortunate enough to have a good opportunity of obtaining photographs of this large and handsome member of the thrush family. A nest was found not more than 5ft. from the ground in a fruit tree in a large orchard. Three eggs only were laid, and when the young were hatched I erected my tent a few yards from the tree, moving it nearer after a day or two, and finally to within 8ft. of the nest. Shortly before 10.30 on April 23rd I entered the tent and made my first



W. Farren. A SANITARY INSPECTION. Copyright.

attempt to photograph the parent missel-thrushes. The young birds were about a week old, and of good size, partly feathered on the wings, with tufts of light-coloured down on head and back. At 10.35 the female flew straight on to the side of the nest with her bill full of broken worms, fed the young, attended to the sanitation of the nest, and departed. From 10.35 to 12.8 fifteen visits with food were made by one or other of the parent birds, ten by the female and five by the male; the latter always stood on that side of the nest as depicted in the photograph showing a back view; the female as invariably on the far side of the nest, giving a breast view. On three occasions the latter sat and brooded the young for about five minutes. At every visit but one the food brought was broken worms; on the one exception the female brought what appeared to be small berries (probably ivy berries). She carried them hidden from sight in her mouth, and bringing them one by one into her bill, thrust them down the throats of the three young birds.

On April 26th I spent the greater part of another morning in my tent in order to see more of this happy family, and also to complete my series of photographs. On this occasion I secured the four photographs which show the female holding food, feeding the young, inspecting, and cleaning the nest. They prove how constantly she settled in the same spot, for each represents a separate visit; but as she went through exactly the same routine each time they show in sequence what took place



W. Farren. REMOVING SUPERFLUITIES. Copyright.

at each visit to the nest. My best plan will be to describe a single visit. The pictures explain themselves; she would thrust her bill with food into the first open mouth, leaving in it a portion of the food, and then serve the others in turn, carefully noting that the food was properly swallowed. She would then wait, sometimes as long as two minutes, occasionally picking up small pieces of food which had dropped upon the backs of the young birds or into the nest. The food picked up was generally eaten by herself. Except for this she would stand quite still with an expectant tilt of her head, as in the third photograph, and because of her motionlessness it was always an easy matter for the camera to render this pose. This is an attitude often caught in bird photographs, and is wont to be described as representing a proud or affectionate contemplation of the brood. In reality it is nothing more nor less than a sanitary inspection. The certain culmination is shown in the fourth photograph,



W. Farren. BROODING O'ER HER YOUNG. Copyright.



of the parent taking up the excreta as voided by the young birds.

Generally when the male left the nest he flew on to a branch a little to the right and above that portion of the tree covered by the camera. Once he remained standing on this branch so long that I risked the focussing, and, twisting the camera round until I judged he was in the area covered by the plate, secured a photograph, not quite sharp, but well worth having.

W. FARREN.

## HEART O' THE OAK.—III.

### IV.—AT PORTSANNET.

THE news had spread in Portsannet, and many of the decent fisherfolk had joined the common sort at the head of the street. They murmured, but it was little of their business, after all. Had any of their own kin been seized, they might have resisted; as it was, Portsannet was well rid of a rogue or two; and as for the Pillers, they, too, were in a sort of vagrants. True, when a red-haired, slipshod, unkempt wench appeared, holding a dead retriever bitch in her arms, they wondered, and some called her a hussy; but others, looking again, cried that it was a shame. But a dead dog was not a deal to make a trouble about, and what they would be gladdest to see was the stern of the longboat that was fastened down by the jetty.

And why did Jessie, with her lover pinioned and about to be reft from her, take his case less passionately than that of the cold and stiff animal? She could not have told you. Maybe her mind could comprehend only the small evil; or, as men in moments of stress will occupy themselves with foolish, trivial things, an instinct bade her hold the unbearable thought away from her. Likely enough it was this last; for, suddenly seeing Willie's haggard eyes on her, she cried, faintly: "Dinna look at me now, or 'twill be th' last! Turn thy face away! And ye—some o' ye—show me where th' bailiff lives."

A woman took her own shawl and set it over her shoulders. "Dinna shame us, lassie," she said; and "Ay, ay—where d'ye say he lives?" Jessie replied.

"Best tak' her to our spare cham'er, Ellen," a man's voice said; but Jessie called again for the bailiff; he was a harmless man, wi' a pleasant word for folk. His oaks and pines were but half cut; nay, they had not started with the pines.

"I'll tak' ye to th' bailiff, dearie. Come, then," said the woman who had given her the shawl; and suddenly Jessie began to tremble. Without glancing once at Willie, she crossed to the narrow entry of a passage, laid down the dog's body, and then turned to the woman. "Come, make haste," she said. She passed the lieutenant without seeming to see him. The two women turned into a dark lane that was deep rutted with carts, as if it led to a farm. By and by Jessie began to run.

Through a bare orchard a candle shone in the bailiff's window. They found him in his comfortable kitchen smoking his strong tobacco. The two pieces of wood he had brought from the Ladyshaws lay on the table before him, and with the

point of his penknife he was counting the rings of the tree's growth. "A hundred and ninety-six—a hundred and ninety-seven—a hundred and ninety-eight," he said, counting aloud; and when he got to the two-hundredth ring he stuck the point of his penknife into the wood and looked up mildly and enquiringly.

Jessie's railing was past now; she thought no more of Nellie.

"They're taking th' men—th' press—that's cutting the trees; they're taking 'em down th' street now," she announced shortly; "go stop 'em."

"Men?" the bailiff enquired, quite unruffled: "Oh, ay, the Pillers. I remember ye were with 'em. Dear, dear, now; that's awkward. Two more days o' this weather and the leaves 'll be breaking out everywhere. We shall lose the price o' the bark—wi'out we could prosecute for it—no—now that's vexing . . . Ye'd see this piece of oak this morning? Of course. I've counted two hundred; think o'



W. Farren.

COCK MISSEL-THRUSH AT THE NEST.

Copyright.

that! Two hundred year sin' them letters were cut, and more to count yet."

"But they're taking 'em—Willie and Jerry," Jessie murmured, dazed. "Like enow ye wouldn't know Willie's name—it were him cut them pieces for ye . . . Oh, man!" she cried suddenly, "he's my lover—chance ye're wed yersel'—"

"Eh?" said the bailiff; "No."

"Oh, think, wi' your talk o' two hundred year—happen



lovers cut them marks, same as ye've cut a lass's name on a tree!"

"Them that I heard tell of was King's marks," the bailiff mused, "but ay, happen this would be some lad——"

Jessie dropped face foremost on the table, and the fisher-woman spoke sharply.

"Come out o' your moon-trances, Matthew Hudson!" she cried; "think what can be done. They'll up anchor in a couple of hours' wi' th' turn o' th' tide. Wad th' Warden stop 'em?"

Jessie moaned softly on the table, and the bailiff deliberated.

"Ay—no—there's no knowing; the Warden might."

"Then put th' horse i' the trap, ye daft fool, and tak' us ower!" the woman cried, losing her temper.

And as the bailiff set his pieces of wood aside with a sigh, he murmured, "Me wed? No——"

In ten minutes, the trap was ready, and the bailiff started the horse at a walk down the rutted lane.

"Give me them reins, ye fat oaf!" Ellen exclaimed. "D'ye think to-morrow'll do for this?"

She shook up the horse, and the trap rocked and jolted. She made a cut with the whip as they reached the street; but Jessie, her face buried in the shawl, saw nothing of the throng a couple of score yards away.

"He trots better nor he gallops," the bailiff suggested mildly, as they turned into another miry lane.

Soon Ellen passed the reins to the bailiff and set her arm about Jessie's swaying, jolting body. She turned back a corner of the shawl to say in her ear, "'Twill be all right yet, dearie! Come, be easy, now."

Before them, where the road wound round the headland, spread the impenetrable blackness of the sea. A sharp turn showed lights half a mile ahead, a little way up the hill; and as they drew nearer the bailiff remarked, as if the fact were not without interest, "He's up, for a wonder; I'd have laid a crown he'd gone to bed."

He pulled up at a wooden gate that had neither lodge nor avenue. One end of the large house a little way up the hill was brightly lighted.

"Lean on my shoulder, lassie," Ellen said. "And you, Matthew, just step as if ye knew what ye'd come about."

They passed up the treeless drive, and at a dark side door the bailiff rang a bell. A servant appeared with a candle, the bailiff said a few words, and they were shown into a small office with a desk and ledgers and tin boxes. The servant left the candle on the desk, and they waited.

In five minutes a heavily-built, grave-looking, elderly man appeared in the doorway. He looked first at one, then at another of the three, and, finally, he turned to the bailiff.

"What's the meaning of this, Hudson?" he demanded.

The bailiff glanced at Ellen and murmured, "Ay, 'tis late—past eleven—half-past eleven, I should say——"

"I'll tell ye th' meaning of it, sir," Ellen said, abruptly. "They'll be off afore Matthew's done looking for his wits i' th' candle-flame." She told him how eight or nine unoffending landmen, going quietly about their trade, had been seized for service on the gundeck of the third-rater that lay off Portsannet Head.

"Well?" said the Warden; and Matthew removed his eyes from the flame of the candle.

"Ay," he said. "It's them that's pilling up at Ladyshaws, and the question is, sir, in two days the sap 'll be set and ye 'll lose the price o' the bark. Wi' them off and away, an action would never lie. The best ye could do would be to seize the odd day's pilling."

"I know this woman; who's the other?"

"Nay, I'm sure I can't tell ye," the bailiff replied; and then, at a touch from Ellen, Jessie let the shawl slip from her head, and looked at the grave face of the Warden. She did not speak. Quietly, as quietly as if she had been at her own bedside, she sank to her knees and folded her hands. She closed her eyes, and the Warden looked on her with knitted brows for a moment, and then began to walk up and down the small apartment.

"I think I see," he said, by and by, stopping before Jessie, and taking her hand and raising her. "I passed Edward my word," he continued, half to himself, "on condition our own people were unmolested. That I can't withdraw, not even on the plea that these are in my own employ. But I'll do what I can. Follow me."

He led the way along a dark passage, and at the end of it drew a curtain aside. A soft glow of light spread about them. "Go in that door," the Warden said, pushing Jessie gently forward; and Jessie found herself in a dining-room where half-a-dozen candles in silver sticks stood over their own still images in a polished table. "There's the Commander himself," said the Warden.

A white-haired gentleman, in a rich uniform of blue, white, and gold, sat at one corner of the shining table. A decanter of wine stood at his elbow, the breaking of the soft light through

which dyed the white ruffle at his wrist with ruby red. He was looking at a watch that he held in his hand, and Jessie knew not what beauty it was in his face that seemed to steal like a comforting balsam over her heart. The Warden crossed and spoke in a low voice to him, and presently he looked up from his watch. At a sign from him Jessie stood forward, and Ellen and the bailiff fell back.

"What is your name?" he asked her, in a very gentle voice; and when she had told him, "Where do you live?" he asked again. She told him that, too; and then he began to ask her many questions. What brought her so far from her home? Of what sort were her friends? What her daily life? She answered all very tremblingly; she felt that there could be no passion in this man's presence; and by and by he knew all about Willie and Jerry and fat Maggie and the fatal journey that had given her her first sight of the sea.

"Come nearer, my maid. And so you have but now seen the sea and a ship?"

"Ay, sir, to my sorrow."

"So?" answered the stately gentleman. "Ah, women women, never one of you yet but dreaded the sea!—Tell me Henry: is it that they know the sea is more powerful than they? Do they know the dream that we, we others, dream—the discontent that lies in all achievement, the urge? . . . And not the youth only; the old man, too, is drawn from the chimney corner, as I am drawn—as I must go even now with the turn of the tide.—Well, I had my choice, and twice or thrice I have warmed my hands at a fire that glows on no husband's hearth. Perhaps I shall do so once more, and so die content. For marrying some, but we others are for the sea, the dream, the unrest. . . ." He mused, and Jessie wondered if the face of a saint could be more beautiful than that on which her eyes were fixed.

"Well, that is my destiny, not another's," he resumed by and by. "My child, have they told you why the acorn is set in the ground, and tended and fostered till it becomes a tree, and then dies, as we all die, to a nobler service?"

Jessie did not reply, not rightly understanding him; and the white-haired commander, putting his fingers into the pocket of his waistcoat, drew out two acorns. He considered them as they lay in the palm of his hand.

"Heart o' the oak, that holds it all for us, for us others—the rest we scorned in our youth, the boundless sea, the endeavour that must be its own reward, the pleasantness of life foregone . . . It may be that we chose ignorantly, blindly; perhaps we have doubted since, doubted but it had been better to choose the shelter of the rafters and the woman at our side and the little ones . . . no matter. Twice or thrice, and once more under God's pleasure . . . Girl, I come ashore but thrice in ten years, and there are hardly ten years now remaining to me. For thirty years I have carried acorns in my pocket, and have planted them when opportunity came, and have seen tall oaks of my own planting. And your woodmen come in the season and cut them down, and they are boited together to be the houses of some of us—our hearths, homes, lodging, we others who have chosen it so . . . Think of it when you see your lover set his hand to the axe, and when you feel his arms about you in the darkness, too . . . You, too, have your choice; go—nay, stay.—You shall see the last of me, Henry; the gig is waiting now.—Plant me these last acorns, girl; heart o' the oak, heart o' the oak. . . ."

The tide rustled and talked as it receded swiftly down the river channel, and here and there one of the stakes that marked out the waterway could be distinguished dimly in the darkness. The craft in the harbour began to heel over as the water left them. The tide washed and slapped against hulls and pebbles and wooden groyne and stone angles; and at the top of the breakwater half-a-dozen lanterns showed a group of dark figures that looked seaward.

The riding-lights of the ship had changed position; and between the ship and the harbour mouth the grunt of oars on rowlocks could be heard. A light appeared at the bow of a boat and shone on the water that broke at its foot. The group shuffled to one side of the breakwater as the creaking of the oars drew nearer, and they could see the effort of the rowers as the current became rapid and confined. The boat laboured up past the stone entrance, and a man ran along the breakwater, leaped down to the crunching pebbles, and cast a rope. The pebbles grated harshly as the group followed him and pressed down to the boat. A man sprang from the ship's boat to a rocking dinghy, and thence to another and another; and the boats tossed and knocked, and the water lapped loudly. The man sprang down to the beach, and Jessie Wheeler ran to him with a low cry. Another followed him, but, except that Jennie Holmes cried once "Father!" nobody spoke. In a few minutes all were landed, and the boat was thrust off immediately. Mechanically the group moved towards the breakwater again; they stood there as the boat dropped down the harbour and went out on the whispering tide. Suddenly Jennie Holmes broke into hysterical

sobs, and Willie Ramsey caught Jessie in his arms as she reeled against a wooden butt.

A woman touched his arm.

"Are ye him? . . . Ay, she's overwrought. Ye'd best carry her to my house while morning. Happen a

two-three neighbours 'll put the rest o' ye up. What say ye, folk?"

—And the Pillers turned their backs to the sea, filed off the breakwater, and followed the men and women of Port-sannet.

OLIVER ONIONS.

## HOMES AND HAUNTS OF INSECTS.

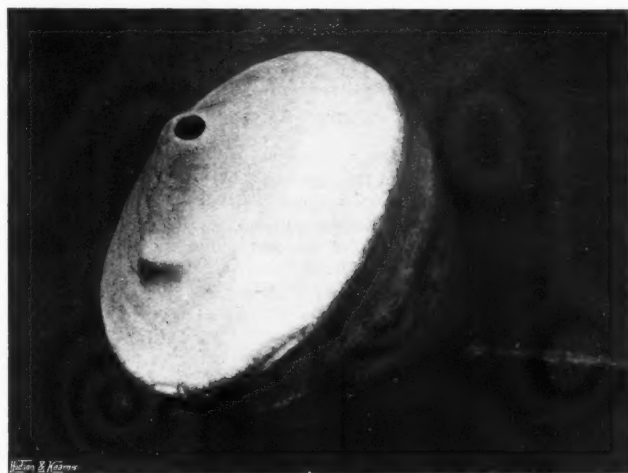
**P**ERHAPS the most striking fact bearing upon the study of entomology—one, moreover, which is at once forced upon the attention of every observer of wild life—is the extraordinary abundance of insects. It has been estimated that, both in species and in the number of individuals, insects far exceed all other animals; nor will the reader be disposed to doubt the statement, though he be the veriest tyro in natural history lore. To see insects in their innumerable hosts and armies it is necessary to visit tropical countries, or, at least, such as lie nearer to the equator than our own sea-girt islands. Yet even here in England the marked preponderance of insects over other forms of animal life is very apparent. With the sole exception of birds, insects are the only animals which, in this country, force themselves upon our attention. Standing on any summer day in a meadow or a wood clearing, one sees, perhaps, a bird or two, and possibly a rabbit or a mouse; but on every side there will surely be scores of



CUCKOO-SPIT.

insects, darting through the air, hovering over the flowers, and creeping among the stems of the herbage.

Not the least interesting feature in the life histories of these wondrous beings is the manner in which each provides for itself an abode or safe retreat. By far the larger number of insects either possess some such retreat, or at least construct a nursery for their offspring. These habitations range from mere burrows beneath the surface of the ground to wonderfully-wrought nests, made from a material specially prepared by the insects themselves. If we commence our brief survey of the homes and haunts of insects with the burrowers, we are faced at once by a vast company of creatures, most of which find not only shelter, but food as well, beneath the soil. As an example of such insects we may select the well-known May-bug, or cockchafer. It need hardly be mentioned that these insects and their larvæ, which are known as white grubs, are injurious, the mature beetles attacking the leaves of forest trees, and the grubs feeding upon the roots of crops and grasses. All farmers and landowners must have had



NEST OF BRAZILIAN TREE WASP.

personal experience of their depredations at one time or another. Briefly, the life history of the chafer is as follows: The female beetle lays her eggs in the earth, usually in loose, dry soil. As soon as the grubs hatch, they commence to feed upon the roots around them, and continue to do so—save, perhaps, in very cold weather—for a period of three years. They then burrow deeply into the soil, form an oval cell of earth, and there change to pale brown pupæ, which in the succeeding spring give birth to perfect winged beetles.

Next to the burrowers, we may consider those insects which tunnel into wood and other vegetable substances. They form an enormous group, many members of which are highly injurious to agricultural and horticultural interests. A good instance of a wood-tunnelling insect is the cossus or goat moth. The grubs, which attain to a great size, infest several kinds of fruit



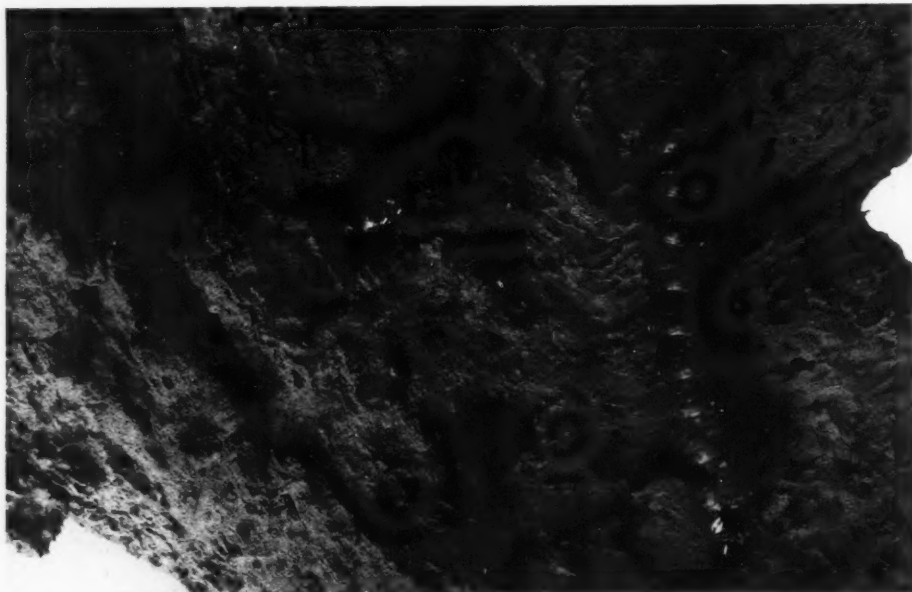
HIBERNACULUM OF CATERPILLARS.



and forest trees. They burrow into the living wood, causing the tree to "bleed" seriously, and ultimately destroying it. This grub also passes three years in its tunnels ere it becomes sufficiently mature to enter upon its pupa state.

Many beetles must be numbered among the wood-tunnelling insects. Of these, the great group Longicornia—the longhorns—are especially interesting. One, our native *Saperda populnea*, attacks the young shoots of aspens and poplars, and is common near London. The grubs tunnel in the twigs, causing them to expand and to form round swollen knobs. Many Longicorns, however, feed upon dead and decaying timber, and are thus directly beneficial to the world at large. This is especially the case in the tropics, where the family is exceedingly numerous, and represented by many large species, the grubs of which are capable of reducing fallen trees to pulp in a surprisingly short space of time. Indeed, it is said that in certain regions, such as the Amazons, the forests, in course of time, would be blocked up by their own decay, and ultimately disappear, were it not for the ceaseless activities of the Longicornia.

Not a few insects pass periods of their lives in fruits, often much to the annoyance of the market gardener. Perhaps the best known is the so-called codlin moth, a pest which by no means confines itself to the apple whose name it bears, but attacks all the best kinds indiscriminately. The moth lays its eggs singly upon the young green apples. As soon as the grub hatches, it tunnels into the substance of the fruit and makes for the core, upon which it chiefly feeds. Many of the apples known as "windfalls" have been attacked by these grubs, and the little pests may be discovered merely by splitting the fruit open with a knife. The moth is troublesome wherever apples are grown, and is especially dreaded in Tasmania. The grubs, or caterpillars, of other small moths actually mine between the outer skins of leaves, subsisting upon the green tissue which they gnaw away. That many of these insects are exceedingly minute is obvious when it is realised that the leaves within which they burrow and feed are often not much thicker than stout paper. Many leaves are thus attacked, but perhaps those of the common bramble most frequently. Sometimes the workings of the caterpillars are seen in long, tortuous galleries; at other times the inner tissue has been eaten away over a considerable area, and blister-like blotches result.



GOAT MOTH CATERPILLARS.

In England we have not many insects which gain shelter by means of a secretion from their own bodies. There is, however, at least one good instance, to wit, the little frog-hopper, known to every country boy as the "cuckoo-spit" insect. The strange patches of frothy moisture wherein it dwells are familiar, at certain seasons of the year, to every country rambler. The tiny insect feeds upon, and derives its copious supply of moisture

from, the sap of the plant upon which it dwells. Ultimately, when the "cuckoo-spit" insect attains to maturity, it abandons its frothy home and lives a dry and active life as a fully-developed frog-hopper. Many of its near relations, especially in tropical countries, have the power of covering themselves with waxy secretions. Something of the kind is seen in the case of the well-known and much-dreaded "woolly



COCKCHAFER GRUBS FEEDING IN GRASS.

aphis," an imported pest which has of late years made itself very much at home upon our apple trees. There can be little doubt that these secretions, whatever their character, are a provision of Nature whereby the insects are disguised and hidden from the sharp eyes of birds and other insectivorous creatures.

Case-making insects form a small but interesting group. Perhaps the best known are the aquatic larvæ of the various species of caddis-fly. As soon as the young larva emerges from the eggs it sets about collecting material for the construction of its case, and continues to repair and enlarge this habitation until the time arrives when, being full fed, it closes the entrance and assumes its pupa form. Different species of caddis grubs select different materials for case-making. Thus, some choose small fragments of stick or reed, others make use of tiny stones, and in an aquarium will not hesitate to appropriate for the purpose tiny portions of bright-coloured glass, while still others gather together a number of small shells, caring not whether their rightful owners have, or have not, abandoned them. But caddisflies are not the only insects whose grubs form protective cases. The habit is shared by the caterpillars of certain moths, belonging to several families. Lengths of grass, reed, or stick are generally employed, the rough case or tube being usually lined with silk. In the case of many species of Psychidæ (mostly tiny moths, one or two examples of which are found in England), the females are wingless, and in some instances even destitute of legs. They are, of course, incapable of quitting the cases which they constructed as caterpillars, and are visited therein by the males.

Among lepidopterous larvæ we find also certain species which dwell in company and construct a common nest, or tent, for the benefit of the community. Such are the well-known lackey, browntail, and goldtail moths—the tent caterpillars, which occasionally work so much havoc in orchards. The tents are really nests of silk, spun among the leaves and twigs of the trees. In them the caterpillars live when young, and to them they return for shelter in rainy weather, and at night, even when they are more mature. All the European species, which pass the winter in the larval state, construct hibernaculums, or winter sleeping-places. These nests are conspicuous objects in the branches. When torn open they reveal a surprising thickness of spun silk, forming a dense, non-conductive wall; and at the centre of the mass lie from thirty to



forty tightly-packed caterpillars, waiting for the return of the springtime, when they will resume their interrupted feeding.

But of all insects the most accomplished nest-builders are certainly the Hymenoptera—the bees and wasps. Of these, wasps must surely be accorded the first place. True, their claim to this distinction might be contested by the bees, whose wonderful wax cities exhibit such a perfection of structure and arrangement. But bees have been assisted in many ways by mankind for many centuries, while wasps have received no aid. The more credit, therefore, is due to them. British wasps are divided into two groups, the solitary (or those which pass their lives among the flowers, building only little cradles or nurseries for their grubs), and the social (or those which dwell together in colonies and construct elaborate common nests). The cells, or nurseries, of the solitary wasps are often built of mud. They are sometimes placed in a hole or cranny, or they may be fixed to a twig or grass stem. In each is an egg, besides a store of food—small caterpillars, beetles, or grubs, as the case may be—for the wasp larva when it hatches. One or more species of the British genus *Odynerus* have the quaint habit of constructing their mud cells in holes or crevices of manufactured objects, such as discarded pipes or cotton-reels. They have even been known to build them in the barrels of an old pistol which had been left undisturbed in a garden shed.

It is, however, among the social wasps that we find the most wonderful nest-building; we find, too, a very striking physiological difference between the wasps themselves. For, whereas the solitary wasps are merely divided into sexes—so many males, so many females—social wasps have also a large percentage of undeveloped insects known as "workers." They are really imperfectly-formed females, and their office is to build and repair the common nest, and to feed and care for the grubs. It is, in fact, largely owing to the existence of these "workers" that nest-building among the social wasps has been so wonderfully developed. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that the foundation, so to speak, of every wasp's nest is laid by a single insect—the queen mother. She it is who, having passed the winter months in some dry cranny, issues forth in search of a suitable hole or tree branch, constructs a few small cells, lays eggs therein, and feeds the young grubs until they arrive at maturity. Then this small family takes over the labours of the young city, which continues to flourish, and to enlarge its borders, throughout the summer.

Perhaps the best known of our native tree wasps is the little species called *Vespa norvegica*. Its nests are usually found suspended from the branches of a larch tree. They are quaint and, to many people, rather mysterious objects, the colour being dark grey. Very fragile-looking are they; nor can it be said that they possess much actual strength, for they are pre-eminently summer habitations. Yet, despite this fact, they prove capable of resisting protracted spells of inclement weather. At the same time, the tree wasps' nests of the tropics usually possess a much better finish, and are much stronger. One of these, shown in the accompanying photograph, has a thick smooth exterior resembling the stoutest cardboard, and seems capable of resisting the effects of long-continued rains. This particular nest was constructed by a common South American social wasp; it was cut from an orange tree in Brazil.



LEAF TUNNELLED BY CATERPILLAR.

of these dainty plovers running on marvellously twinkling feet across a stretch of shining wet sand is, familiar though it may be, to me always one of the most charming sights of the seashore.

#### ITS WANDERING HABITS.

Although our littoral is seldom without a few of these graceful waders, ring-plovers are, as a matter of fact, among the greatest of wanderers. I have seen them frequently on the shores of South Africa, and their range extends so far as Northern India. Though very rarely, they have even been identified in Australia. They breed as far South as North Africa and the Atlantic Islands, while to the eastward they have been found nesting in Turkestan. Northward their migratory range extends so far as Smith's Sound and Behring Strait. During many years' observation I cannot see much, if any, diminution in the numbers of these plovers on British shores, and they still nest commonly on many parts of the coast.

#### THE LITTLE RINGED PLOVER AND SEA-COW BIRD.

Two very near cousins of our ring-dotterel, as it is often miscalled, are the little ringed plover (*Ægialitis curonica*) and the triple-collared plover (*Æ. tricoloris*), the latter often known up country in South Africa as the sea-cow bird, from its attendance on the hippopotamus, the zee-koe of the Boers. The little ringed plover, albeit a rare visitant to these islands, is an established British bird; it has an immense migratory range, extending from Scandinavia to China and Japan, and from New Guinea to Iceland. This bird bears a strong resemblance to our common ring-plover, but is smaller in size and has dusky shafts to all the primary feathers save the outer one. The sea-cow bird, which is a quite familiar figure by the inland waters of South Africa, as well as along the coast-line, always reminds the English wanderer or colonist strongly of its British cousin, the ring-plover. It is, however, nearly two inches shorter, and has a grey throat and three collars—black, white, and black. The fringe, or cere, round the eyes is brick red, instead of orange, and the legs are straw yellow with a tinge of blue. This lovely little ring-plover has identically the same habits as its British cousin. In the days

when "hippos" were plentiful in many parts of South Africa it was to be seen frequently in attendance on these monsters—probably from purely selfish motives—and so received its name, sea-cow bird, from natives and Boers. The wrybill of New Zealand (*Anarhynchus frontalis*) is another Colonial cousin of our ring-plover. This wader has a black throat-collar, and in general appearance is not very dissimilar; but the notable head markings of our species are lacking, and the bill is longer and has a curious lateral twist, apparently specially designed for feeding round stones and rocks.

#### HERONRIES AND MIGRATION.

The more one observes heronries closely, the more one is convinced that migration plays an important part in the lives of the builders of these nesting-places. Last year a Sussex heronry, which I have watched closely for a good many seasons, had certainly fewer birds nesting there than usual. I began to think that a neighbouring colony of rooks might be answerable for this circumstance. It was not so, however, and this spring the same heronry has more birds nesting than I have remarked for some years back. One can scarcely resist the conclusion that this ancient nesting-place has been recruited this season by migrants from other quarters, and it is by no means improbable that some of these great birds may have stretched their flight from very far-distant countries. The young herons of each season cannot, it is obvious, as they attain maturity, all find room in the same nesting-place; some of them must make their way far abroad, and may penetrate even to South Africa, where the grey heron is well known. Is it not more than possible that these wandering birds may be impelled with the spring desire to revisit their old homes in England, and that, finding there is room, they may nest in the very place where they were themselves reared? The thing is by no means improbable, when one considers the nature of these birds, and their splendid powers of flight. The migrating habit of birds is, however, a subject full of difficulty, a subject which, in the very nature of things, must always remain more or less of a sealed book, even to the most acute and industrious of observers.

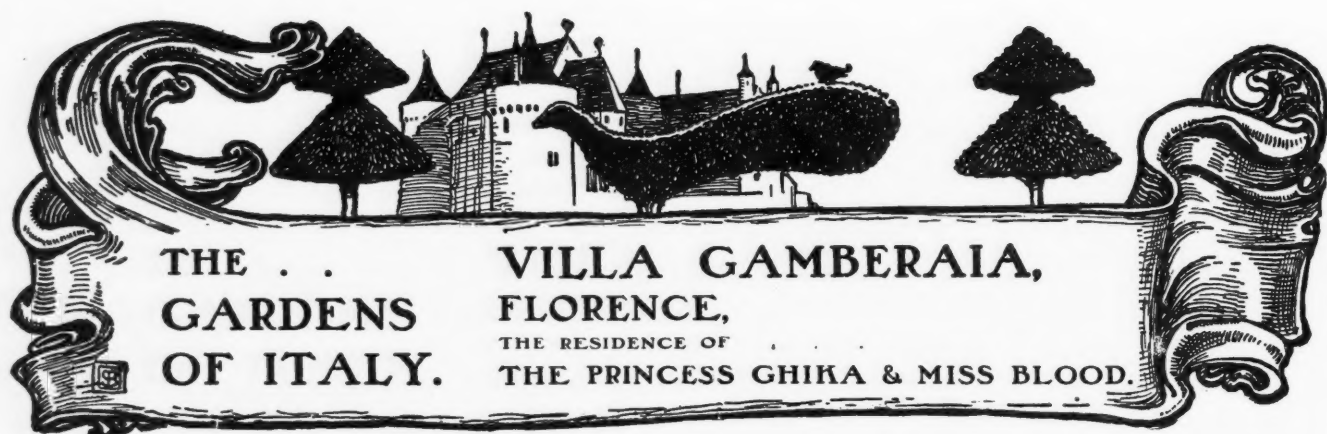
#### SUMMER MIGRANTS.

This year our feathered summer visitors are late in coming. The continued spell of cold weather has checked their flights, and it seems to me that up to the end of April there has been a distinct scarcity of nightingales, wood-wrens, willow-wrens, blackcaps, white-throats, garden and other warblers. With a turn of the wind to the south-west, and a night or two of warm rain, we shall see all this changed, and troops of these sweet songsters will have made the passage. But thus far 1906 has been an exceptionally late year for the spring migrants. Nightingales one may consider due in considerable numbers in our Southern Counties by the end of the second week in April; yet this year on the Sussex coast-line there has been a marked scarcity of these birds. In eight or nine seasons I never remember hearing or seeing so few of these birds among the woods and copses of East Sussex up to the opening days of May. In 1872, on April 13th, quite a big migration of these birds took place, and on that morning, on the beach at Brighton, these birds were to be found under every bathing machine. A strange resting-place, surely! The explanation is, of course, a very simple one; the birds had arrived exhausted from their over-Channel flight, and availed themselves of the first shelter that presented itself to them. Mr. J. E. Harting, in his excellent book, "Our Summer Migrants," is my authority for this curious fact in the lore and history of nightingales. H. A. B.

## WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

### THE RING-PLOVER.

I SAW recently one of these most beautiful little shore-birds pecking about assiduously in a grassy meadow not far from the sea. The situation was a little unusual, for the reason that one associates this charming wader so constantly with the edge of the tide, muddy estuaries, backwaters and lagoons, and the stretches of sand and shingle in which it so often makes its nest. Still, in springtime the sand-lark, as country people yet call it, may not infrequently be seen among marshland meadows in the neighbourhood of the sea. During the spring and autumn migrations these birds may be met with in the vicinity of fresh water some way inland. Always one of the neatest and most comely of all our shore-birds, this little plover, as I saw it the other day, resplendent in its spring breeding plumage, seems to me quite one of the handsomest of all our British birds, the grey-brown upper parts, glossy black head adorned with white forehead and eye stripes, the white neck-ring, black gorget, orange and black bill, and snowy under-parts all uniting to give this shapely little creature a wonderful distinction of its own. The full dark eye, too, is very beautiful. A flight



"If you get pure beauty, you get about the best thing God has to give." Long ago, so spoke an old painter, and his words came back to me again and yet again as on a June afternoon I strayed in Villa Gamberaia. (A villa, I may explain, in Italy means not only the house, but the grounds as well.) From the moment that you pass the gate, with its sentinel cypresses, the impression is one of such perfect loveliness that at last, by force of contrast, the mind goes back to strong Caprarola or tragic Este, only to turn once more to bathe in the perfection of the Tuscan villa.

An old villa has been taken, unspoiled, unchanged, and put into hands, loving and full of knowledge, the hands of owners who, in restoring, are careful not to go too far and yet who have initiative, who are not afraid to show that the world has gone forward, and that to-day can add beauty even to the most beautiful creations of yesterday.

Gamberaia stands on a long, narrow piece of land; it is not large, but it is utilised and managed so as to give all that the mind can desire of variety, and space itself. It is a marvel of deft planning. From the short entrance alley the visitor emerges on the long bowling green of soft rich turf, an avenue than which nothing can be more perfect. On one side is set the house, the

cream-washed villa, with wide eaves and heavy mouldings, on the other, a high retaining wall, crowned with statues and old vases of pink geraniums; the bowling alley stretches far beyond and far behind. In front, where the eye naturally turns, the grass ends in a balustrade surmounted by one graceful statue, flanked by old fir trees, and far away the hills and valleys faint into the blue distance. Turn and look towards the other end, and past the masses of climbing pink blossoms. The green closes in a circular grotto of coloured pebbles and shells, an arch, a balustrade, beyond which, high against a turquoise sky, the dark, dainty finger-tips of cypresses point upwards, standing in a line, and fuller and more rugged ones close in and descend on either hand.

The bowling green, long and very narrow, runs the whole length of the grounds. We pass through the house, cool and gay, with marble floors and flowery cotton coverings, and come out on the western façade to, again, a narrow grass strip, but not so long, and bounded by a balustrade on which stand vases and solemn stone dogs. Leaning over, or sitting, if you like best, on the broad low parapet, you can look down on a gravel quarter-deck, the length of the bowling green, along which grow roses and poppies, and which in wet weather makes a good



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THE TERRACE GARDEN. FROM BOWLING GREEN GATE.

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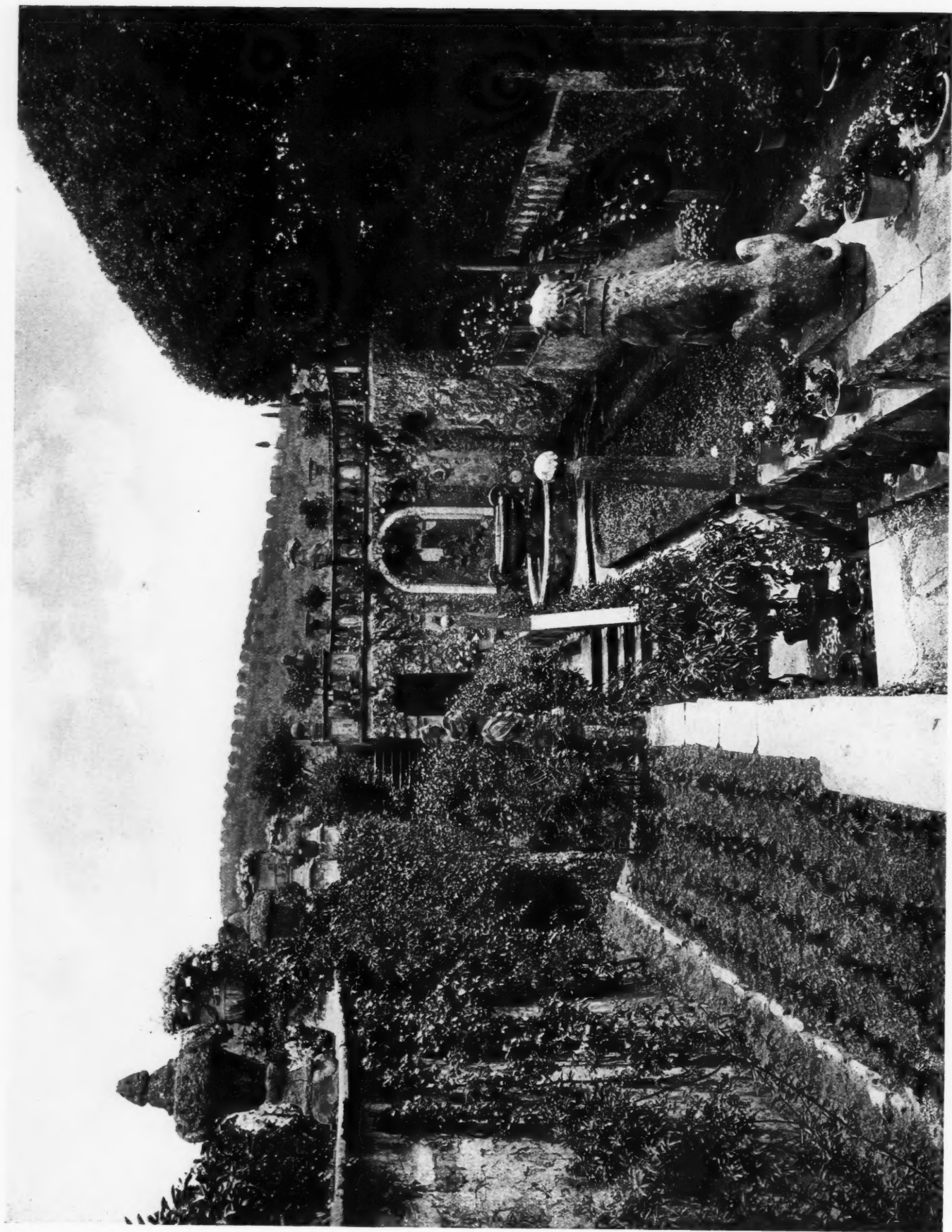




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WESTERN GARDEN AND VILLA.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



THE TERRACE GARDEN FROM THE NORTH.

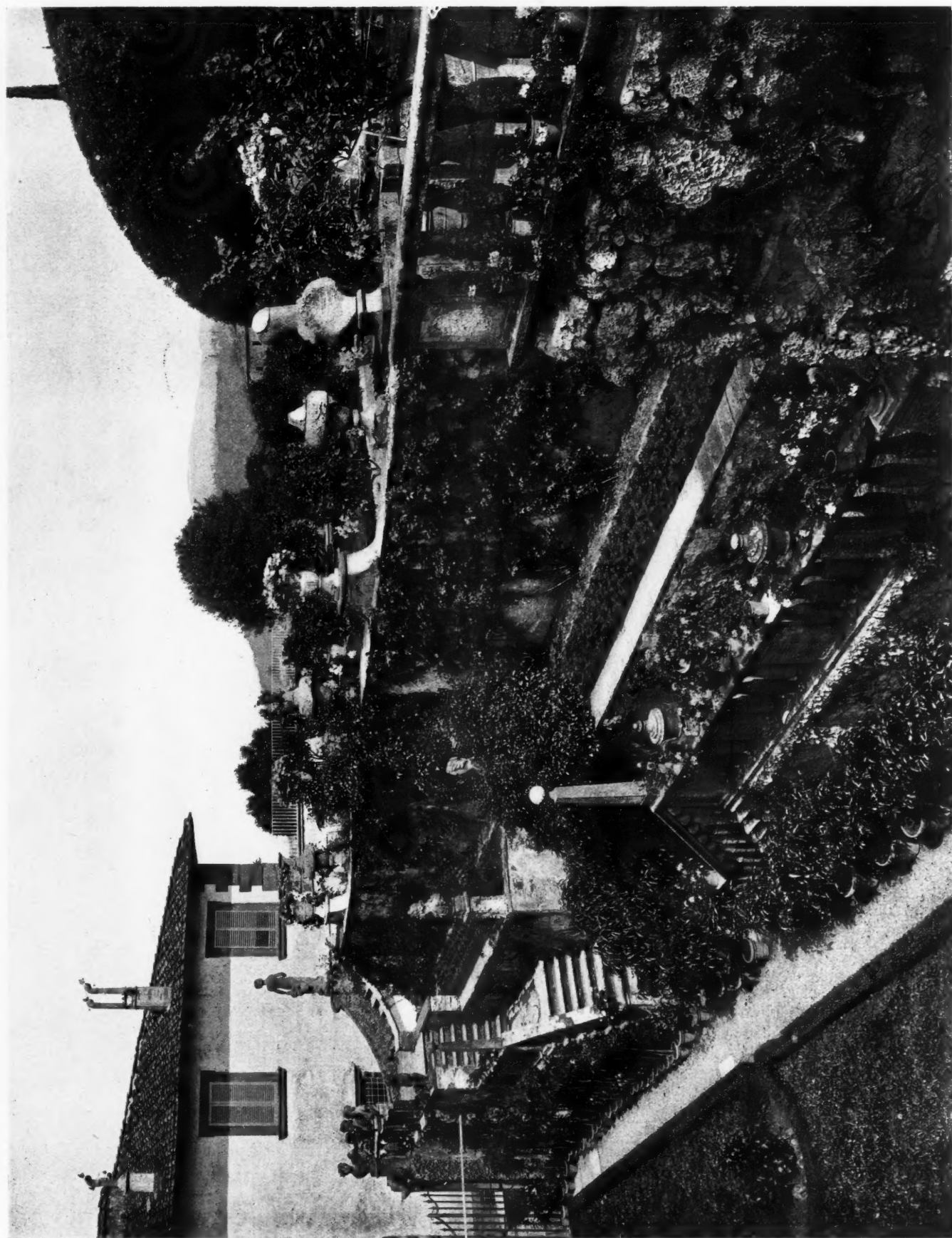
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THE TERRACE GARDEN FROM THE NORTH.



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THE TERRACE GARDEN.

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*SHELTERED BY ILEX HEDGE.*

"COUNTRY LIFE."

dry parade. The house has a light open arcade thrown out on either side, and to the south is an oblong piece of ground, which, when the present owners took it, was nothing but a rough and neglected half vineyard, half kitchen garden, which had been used for many years as a sort of utility plot. It is now the water garden, and huge tanks are covered with white and pink

water-lilies; fountains play in all directions, and the one old fountain which was found there still occupies the place of honour in the middle. They think it must be from a design on Ammanati's, for half effaced as it is, it still shows a master's touch. A boy riding a dolphin, a common device enough; but how this boy rides! with what arrogant mischief the imp



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*LIMONIA.*

"COUNTRY LIFE."

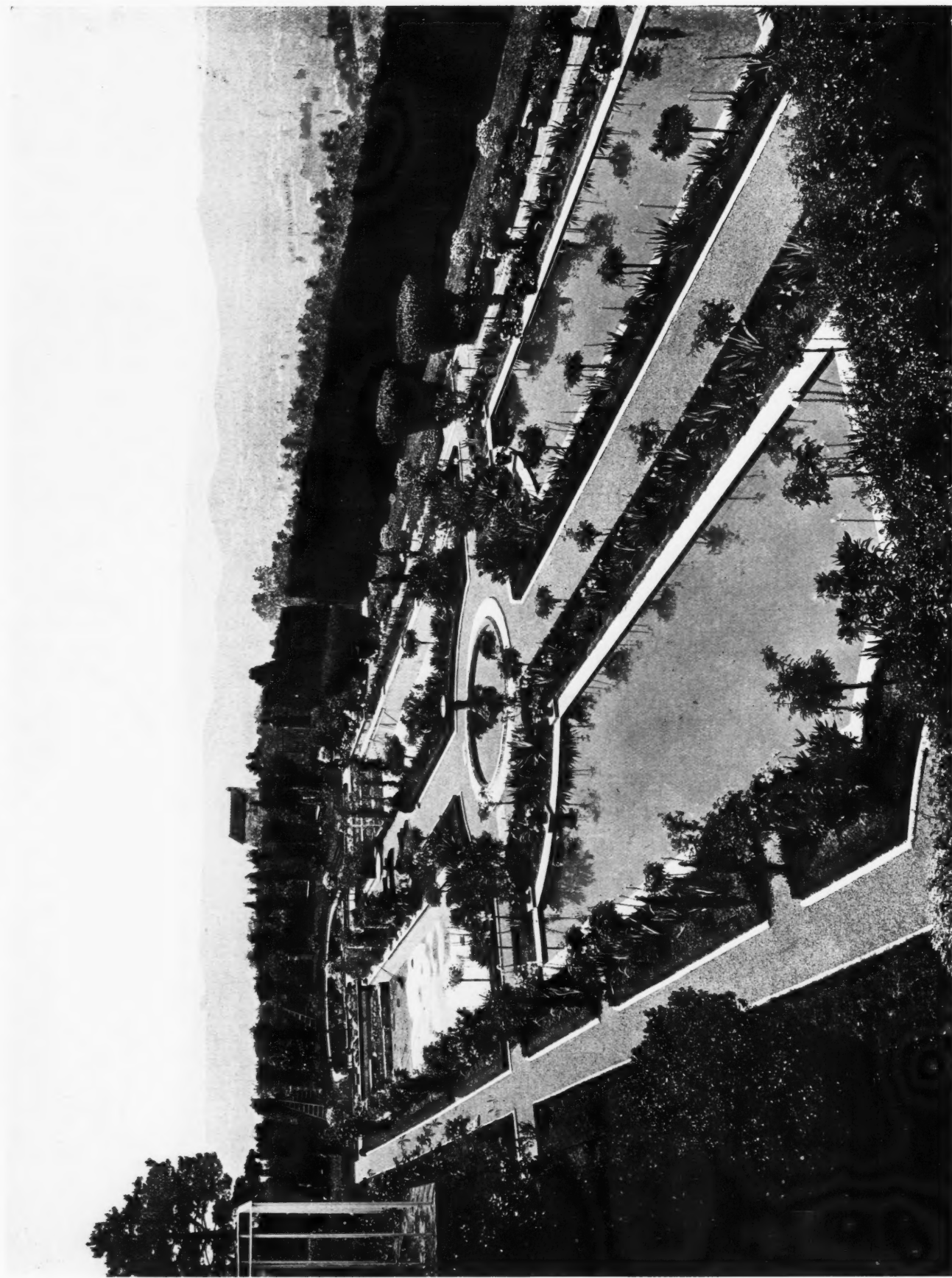




TERMINAL OF THE WESTERN GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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WESTERN GARDEN FROM THE VILLA BALCOANA.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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WESTERN GARDEN FROM THE VILLA BALCONY.

THE BOWLING GREEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

bestrides his aquatic mount, and balances the fountain basin of his confident head. Thanks to all this water, there are flowers in profusion. The roses are quiet for the moment, after their summer bloom, and are preparing for that of the autumn, but oleanders make a rosy tracery against the blue sky; geraniums of every shade flood the stone vases; tall white lilies are just passing over. The whole is a feast of pure colour against backgrounds of clipped dark green. At the farther end, a circular arcade of yews show up marble columns twined with roses and shade stone seats, and, of course, the lemon trees stand everywhere along the stone-paved paths in their great terra-cotta pots.

From the bowling green we pass through the wall to a terraced wood. The wood is quite small, but like a little cathedral, so dark and dim, with stone seats under the dense boughs, and then without warning, we come out again into a little grotto garden, with fountain and rococo statues and balustraded flights of steps which lead up to a lemon garden, backed by the lemon-house, the *stanzone* which one finds in every old Italian garden, where all the half-hardy plants can be stored in the winter. Beyond this again lies the real wood, with winding walks under ilexes and cypresses, and little encampments of tables and seats, a cool place even in the midday glare. The garden is wonderfully spaced and full of surprises. Coming back to the bowling green, we pass an inconspicuous opening in

and developed a perfect passion for making fountains and *jeux d'eau*. In 1636 one poor lady, a Signora Aurelia, brings an action against him, complaining that he has cut off necessary water from her villa by the reservoirs he has made. Not unnaturally he left his property much in debt, and when his nephew Andrea died in 1688, the estate was heavily mortgaged. Andrea's son, another Jacopo, died in 1717 without heirs male, and the Capponi and Cerretani dividing the Lapi property, Gamberaia fell to the former. It is to Andrea, without doubt, that we owe the bowling green and the dark cypresses and stone statues. The old villa has changed hands many times since then, and was even at one time let out in lodgings for the summer. Fortunately it has never been spoilt, and it now belongs to two ladies, Princess Ghika and Miss Blood. Both ladies are artists, and in their hands the villa becomes every year more beautiful.

## IN THE GARDEN.

### SELECTIONS OF PLANTS.

WE are frequently asked to give the names of plants which may be regarded as "safe," that is, may be considered as almost certain to flower satisfactorily. The following lists will be, we hope, helpful, and planting and sowing may be undertaken at once. Much of the early sowing, we are afraid, has been rendered useless through the long drought and keen north-easterly



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WALL OF THE LIMONIA GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the stiff hedge which borders a portion of it, and may step into a retired nook, quite cut off from the rest, dressed with roses and irises, and looking down upon what a sea of grey-green olives. It signifies so little that a garden like this is not very large, for away on every hand stretches the larger garden of the laughing Italian country-side, in such soft waves of melting colours that it is immaterial where the exact boundaries end.

From a broken shield dug up in 1900, inscribed "Zenobius Lapius Fundavit, M.D.C.X.," it seems probable that the villa was erected for the Lapi family. The name of the architect is not forthcoming, but it has an elegance and simplicity in the arrangement of the small courtyard with pillars in the centre and the graceful flying balconies which take off its squareness, which indicate some very capable master of the late Renaissance, perhaps Ammanati, or one of his pupils. Numerous contracts and lawsuits exist connected with the water supply for the fountains. In 1619 Zenobi Lapi died, leaving the property to two nephews, Jacopo di Andrea Lapi and Andrea di Cosimo Lapi, and failing heirs from them it was to be divided between the Capponi and Cerretani families. In 1624 Jacopo died, leaving a young son. His uncle, "The most illustrious Signore Cosimo Lapi, a noble Florentine," laid out the inlaid grottoes,

winds; so in the case of annual flowers a sowing made now will probably give as good results as the seed sown in early April. *Hardy Annual Flowers*: Sweet Pea, Cornflower, the Tree Mallow (*Lavatera trimestris*), Marigold Orange King, Mignonette, Night-scented Stock (for its sweetness in the evening), Nasturtium, Virginian Stock, Shirley Poppy, Sunflower, Eschscholtzia, and Love-in-a-Mist (*Nigella*). *Annual Climbers*: Convolvulus, Nasturtium, Japanese Hop, and Canary Creeper (*Tropæolum canariense*). *Half-hardy Annuals*: China Aster, Celosias and Cock's-combs, Petunia, Phlox, Salpiglossis, Tobacco, Verbena, Zinnia, *Nemesia strumosa* Suttoni, Portulaca, and Chinese Pink. *Biennials* (seed to be sown in late May out of doors, the seedlings planted out in autumn, and flowers will appear the following year): Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum*), Canterbury Bells, Evening Primrose, Foxgloves, Stocks, and Wallflowers. *Climbing Plants*: Roses, Virginian Creeper (*muralis* is the best sort to attach itself to the wall of a house or outhouse), Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia Siphon*), Winter Sweet (*Chimonanthus*, flowers in winter), Clematis, and Fire Thorn (*Crataegus Pyracantha*). Against the wall of a house—Honeysuckles, Ivy, Ja mine, Passion Flower, White Everlasting Pea, Japanese Vine or the common Sweet-water Vine, and Wistaria.

*Plants for the Summer Garden* (to be planted now): Blue Marguerite (*Agathæa celestis*), Tuberous Begonia, Heliotrope, Calceolaria, Cannas, Dahlia, Fuchsia, Lobelia, Geranium, and Salvia patens. *Hardy Border Flowers*: Anemone japonica (the Japan Windflower), Michaelmas Daisy,



Columbine, Aubrietia, Auricula, Campanula, Carnation, Pick, outdoor Chrysanthemums (plant now), Moon Daisy (*Chrysanthemum uliginosum*), Larkspur (*Delphinium*), Doronicum, *Erigeron speciosus superbus*, *Gypsophila paniculata*, perennial Sunflower (*Helianthus*), Christmas Rose, Hollyhock, Lily of the Valley, Lupin, Lychnis, Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*), Forget-me-not, Pæony, Pansy, Pentstemon, Phlox, Primrose, Solomon's Seal, Pyrethrum, Ranunculus, Spiderwort (*Tradescantia virginica*), Sweet William, Trollius (Globe Flower), and Veronica (Speedwell). *Greenhouse Flowers*: Agapanthus (African Lily), Balsam, Begonia, Bouvardia, Calceolaria, Camellia, Canna, Coronilla glauca, Persian Cyclamen, Fuchsia, Heliotrope, Imantophyllum, Marguerite, Geranium, Petunia, Chinese Primula, Azalea, Salvia, Verbena, and Heath (*Erica hyemalis*). *Bulbs*: Hippeastrum (Amaryllis), Crinum Moorei, Freesia, Gladiolus Colvillei The Bride, Hyacinth, Lachenalia, Lily, Daffodil, Tuberose, Tulip, and the Scarborough Lily (*Vallota purpurea*). *Climbing Plants*: Asparagus plumosus, Clematis indivisa, Jasminum grandiflorum, Lapageria, Passion Flower, Plumbago capensis, Solanum asminoides, and Rhynchospermum jasminoides. *Ferns*: Hart's-tongue, Male Fern, Hard Fern (*Blechnum spicant*), Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*), common Polypody, and Shield Fern (*Polystichum*). *Ferns for Baskets*: Adiantum caudatum, Davallia bullata, Goniophlebium sub-auriculatum, Nephrolepis, and Gymnogramma schizophylla gloriosa.

#### THE WHITE AND OTHER PINKS.

Pink-time is approaching, and when the flowers are in beauty is the best season to create a fresh supply of plants by striking them from cuttings, or "pipings," to use another term. Good use should be made of the white and other Pinks. They are the pride of many a cottage garden, and grow strongly in quite ordinary soil. They form pretty edgings—drifts of white bloom—and the silvery grey of the foliage has a winter beauty. We still regard the old fringed white Pink as the sweetest of its race; but, of course, there are others, the most popular being Mrs. Sinkins, Albino, Her Majesty, Mrs. Lakin, and Snowflake. Mrs. Sinkins is more grown than any other, and is certainly a very pretty Pink; the flowers are very double, of the purest white, and filled with scent. Plant from pots at almost any time, but March and September are the two best months, and June is the month to strike cuttings or pipings. Cut the cuttings just under a joint, remove the lower leaves, and put them thickly in boxes filled with light soil. A few crocks should be placed in the bottom for drainage. A hand-light is a necessary protection to the cuttings, and in autumn plant them out, as by that time they will be well rooted. It is essential to examine the soil well, as wireworms show a special fondness for the roots of the Pink. The laced Pinks are interesting, but have not the same garden value as the white varieties. The colouring is laid on the margins of the petals, hence the name "laced," and is confined to shades of purple and rose. There is a certain charm in these quaint varieties, but the stems are too slender to bear the burden of bloom, and the plants are not so free. It is not often that they are represented at the flower exhibitions of to-day, unless the exhibitor belongs to the old school, which we regret is fast disappearing.

#### RANDOM NOTES.

*Narcissus Great Warley.*—In the exquisite group of new and rare Daffodils shown by Miss Willmott at a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society, and awarded a gold medal, the beautiful Great Warley was represented by an imposing group. We well remember the occasion upon which this was first exhibited. It is a large bicolor Narcissus with great strength of perianth and segment, and the colouring is rich and strong. The broad segments spread out to show their creamy colouring, against which the deep yellow trumpet is in conspicuous contrast. Close to this group was the hybrid Will Scarlet, which has pale yellow segments, and a broad cup of orange scarlet. Miss Willmott has done much to popularise the Narcissus, and to encourage the raising of new hybrids and other crosses. In her beautiful garden at Great Warley this wonderful collection thrives amazingly, the soil suiting the majority of the Daffodils there grown.

*Pelargonium Clorinda.*—It is pleasant to find a new Pelargonium honoured with the award of merit of the Royal Horticultural Society, but this has happened to the interesting flower shown recently by the well-known nurserymen, Messrs. H. Cannell and Sons of Swanley. It is the result of crossing a Cape Pelargonium and Pelargonium quercifolium, which we prefer to call the Oak-leaved scented Geranium. The leaves of Clorinda are strongly scented, and the flowers are a pretty

pink colour. We wish the once universal love for the scented-leaved Pelargonium would return.

*Daisy Alice.*—One of the prettiest of the Daisies is called Alice, which has been exhibited on several occasions by the Misses Hopkins, Mere, Cheshire. It is a very free plant, and the neat little leaves are almost hidden beneath the mass of pinkish flowers, a shade so unusual that we do not remember to have seen it before in the Daisy tribe. The form of the flower is as charming as the colour.

## SALLE CHURCH, NORFOLK.

SALLE CHURCH, in Norfolk, some details of which are illustrated in these pages, has been for generations in a state of the most pitiable neglect, and as painful an example of ruin and disorder as any church in this county, which is far from being remarkable for the good order of its places of worship. Long before approaching the parish of Salle, the tall tower, enriched with battlement and pinnacle, is to be viewed for many miles around; and from the



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CHANCEL DOOR.

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summit, when climbed, an extraordinary number of churches may be seen scattered over the surrounding country. To understand the importance of the building it needs a closer inspection, for there are many trees in its vicinity, and it is only when close at hand that the great fabric, with its lofty clerestoried nave, its transepts, aisles and porches, and great chancel, shows itself in all its size and dignity, and the spectator may well marvel why such a rich and costly pile should stand in a small village of only 181 inhabitants. It belongs for the most part to the best period of the Perpendicular style, and possesses unusually felicitous conditions of proportion. The tower is probably as fine an example as may be seen in Norfolk, ornately carved at many points, and embellished with justly celebrated sound holes in its first storey, and has at its west entrance the great double doors common to the big churches of East Anglia, the original woodwork of which is still covered with graceful geometrical ornament, so grey with age that it is near the colour



F. H. Evans. *WINDOWS OF NORTH PORCH.* Copyright.

of the be-lichened stone that frames it. On either side of this portal are tall and rich niches, and on each stone spandrel of the door a winged angel swings a censer, while above are marshalled a long row of escutcheons filled with the coats of arms of the church's benefactors, or sacred symbols. The church is commonly entered by the north porch, which is, undoubtedly, the finest in the building, gracefully ornamented outside with tracery and pinnacles, battlement, and rich niches, whilst its interior has the elaborate stone-groined roof of the period, being beautifully carved and finished in detail; the central boss has depicted upon it the Coronation of the Virgin, which by some strange accident succeeded in escaping the eye of any "Godly" trooper who may have been prowling about at the time when Salle Church was cleansed of Popish ornament. The parvis above is a chapel dedicated to the Virgin, access to which is gained by an octagonal turret, up deeply-worn spiral stairs of stone; the narrow doors are still furnished with the heavy beam bolts and ancient ironwork of the day of their first construction. In this chapel is again another



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*BENCH-ENDS.*

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richly-groined roof of stone; the walls still bear the faded monogram of the crowned Mary, and the piscina still remains. This ornate and picturesque interior, costly to build, with much about its remains that tells of all the skill and care of its erection, is now a lumber-room, and, in the memory of aged men not long since dead, it was once a dame's school.

The descent into the great church below is scarcely more encouraging as to its present condition, and here the spectator beholds a tall and stately nave, fully 88ft. long by 48ft. wide, flanked by high aisles north and south, with a vista of two spacious transepts and a wide choir of 40ft. long. Salle Church has, like many others in Norfolk, the remains of very fine timberwork. The main roof of the nave is not of the hammer-beam



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*AND MISERERES.*

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CEILING OF NORTH TRANSEPT.

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ROOF OF AISLE SHOWING SPANDRELS.

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order, but simply of rafters once highly painted with the repetition of the crowned I.H.S. and M. Its condition for long years has been in such bad repair that the light could be seen through parts of it, and its faded paintings are in as sad a state of decay as much else in the building. The span of this roof is unusual, and since it has no tie-beams visible, or hammer-beams to aid its support, its construction must be of excellent quality for such a fabric to have carried its weight and thrust these four or five centuries, especially in these later times, when dangerous decay has eaten into its timbers, which are now known to be far from safe. The roofs of both transepts are replete with fine ornamentation, and were, until lately, full of holes, the haunt of bats and vermin; but some attempt has been recently made to mend the deplorable decay here, as likewise in the roof of the chancel, a beautiful example of strap-work and rich bosses. Every boss on the chancel roof represents some principal scene in the life of Christ, the last over the altar representing the

Ascension, which is quaintly portrayed by only the feet resting on a cloud and the Apostles looking upward, except the lower part. The rood-screen at the entrance of the chancel has long disappeared, and most of the painting of the latter is nearly obliterated; but the stalls in the chancel remain intact, and are very richly carved; there are thirteen on either side, and twenty-six misereres in good preservation, ornamented in parts with the flowers of the field—strawberry leaf and fruit, together with the leaves of vine and oak, besides quaint heads, some of which wear cowl or cap. They are further embellished with the silver hue that time gives to ancient oak woodwork, and the grain has the appearance of the softness of satin. There are some remains of the bench-ends of poppy heads, but in great disrepair. The church has otherwise a certain number of mean pews, which the bats visit with greater regularity than the faithful; and a typical three-decker pulpit is still *in situ*. The tall windows of the church have some remains of stained glass



in the upper mullions, though occasionally bricks have taken the place of it; but here and there may be found in chancel or transept a saint or apostle, richly arrayed, still unscathed, and, in spite of pervading dirt, showing what once was, before the deluge.

The font of the church, which is the chief climax to the west end, is one of those known as the Seven Sacraments, from these being depicted on the font's bowl. Its great spiral cover is raised from the richly-cusped Gothic beam above it, fixed to the gallery, the windlass and tackle being complete. This font, though mutilated, is a fine object still, and in the day it was first set up it must have been peculiarly handsome. The statuettes that filled the niches, the Evangelists, and their symbolic figures, all making a cluster of carved images, have been dashed to pieces by iconoclasts; the delicate carving on the bowl has also

suffered, like most others, and it is but a wreck of its former state. The first step has around it, in ancient black letter, an inscription which tells that it was the gift of Thomas Luce, his wife, and their son Thomas, the chaplain; and to the charitable mind it may be a matter of some satisfaction that these worthy folk are not above ground to discover the condition of their gift, which cost them so much trouble and money.

Salle Church throughout bears ample evidence of being built and adorned by artists somewhat above the usual standard. The carving is in many places of a superior quality, and the proportions of the building unusually good. The exterior of the church is as remarkable as its interior, less ruinous, and less mutilated; while Time, the great devourer of all things, has so far treated it with greater consideration. The outside arrangement and ornamentation of the chancel is finely grouped with



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THE FONT FROM THE WEST.

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tall tracery windows, parapet, and buttresses, the last named being surmounted with kneeling figures of angels, with their wings thrown back, and as they are raised above the parapet, the effect is the more original and striking. A sad pathos hangs around many of these stately and decaying churches in East Anglia, and the irony of fate is, indeed, strange

when all the infinite care and trouble, lavish expense, and the zealous interest that raised them are taken into account. Their later ruthless destruction, and what was as bad, the apathetic indifference to their ever-increasing ruin, have rendered such places, with the altered conditions of their communities, almost beyond the hope of any saving renovation, and

partial or complete ruin must be the fate of many such fabrics that a timely expenditure would have saved at a comparatively small cost. In the days when Salle Church was built there were not wanting men of zeal and substance in such an undertaking; high up on the tall tower are still to be seen the arms of its benefactors, and lower down, above the great west door, are still intact such coat armour as appertained to the families of Brews, Mauteby, Morley, and Kerdestone, names well known, indeed, in that day, and to those who read of the past in this present time; and they were, moreover, people of some possession and wealth in and out of the County of Norfolk, names likewise well known on the knightly battle roll of such fields as Agincourt and Poitiers and the long French wars; and if members of such families were not imbued with the *entente cordiale*, they, at least, applied some of the spoil of battle to a good purpose. The south transept of Salle Church, and also the south aisle and porch, were raised by one Thomas Brigg, a member of a family that lived at Salle for many centuries, and people of estate and wealth; their arms ornament the exterior of the chapel, together with the scallop of St. James which covers the battlements of the gable. Thomas Brigg made provision for a chaplain to sing for the repose of his soul for ten years after his decease; his two wives are buried before the altar of the chapel, but he himself preferred to lie at the Friar's Minor, Norwich. The north transept and north aisle are both said to have had for principal benefactor, if not chief founder, a John Fountayne, whose family likewise lived some centuries in this parish, and who in 1430 was returned as Chief Gentleman of the County of Norfolk; his monumental brass is still in the north transept, where he is represented in effigy with three wives, for verily some of the benefactors of Salle Church were adepts at matrimony.

Among the few ancient brasses remaining is one in the nave of Galfridus Boleyn (1440) and his wife, the ancestor of Queen Anne Boleyn. The family were already settled in Salle in the reign of Edward III., where they continued until their removal to Blickling, a few miles away. In this church were buried many of Anne Boleyn's kindred, and a black marble slab in the nave has been long pointed out as her own resting-place, according to the legend which tells how her body was conveyed secretly to Salle and interred there.



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FONT AND COVER BEAM.

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## SHOOTING.

## OCCASIONAL VERMIN.

THIS is a title which is a little open to misconception. It is meant to indicate creatures that are not, as a rule, "verminous" from the game-preserver's point of view, but which now and then take to abnormal evil ways, and prey upon game. Even this is not quite a lucid account or quite a full one. It is perfectly true that the same individuals will change their habits from time to time—they will be driven to prey on game owing to the difficulty of getting food which they would prefer; but the title is meant to indicate more particularly that among species of animals which do not, generally speaking, do any harm to game, a few individuals now and then take to evil habits which are not typical, but are peculiar to themselves. This individual variation in animals is becoming much more commonly recognised than it used to be. Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, is among the large and increasing number of field naturalists. He has called emphatic notice to this tendency to individual variation of habit among the wild things—the big game—that he has taken most interest in shooting, both deer and carnivora. It is a variation which seems to be independent of circumstances, and to be determined by the character of the individual. A little reflection will show that it is far more reasonable to think that there would be some such variation than that there would not. We all recognise a difference of disposition in men and in women; we recognise a difference in character in our dogs, horses, and other domestic animals. There is reason to think that in the natural state these differences would be apt to be greater rather than less; yet the writers of books on natural history and on sport, and those who have received in simple faith what they have written, have been very prone to an over-hasty generalisation, to argue from a single instance, or from too few instances, as to the general habits of a species, and on this inadequate evidence to convict or to condemn, as the case may be, the whole class.

This is a risk that is specially apt to happen with the animals that have recently, and with some difficulty, been rescued from the black list of the gamekeepers. The time has gone by, in the more enlightened places, when the keeper killed down every kestrel and every owl; still more has the time gone by when the appearance during a covert-shoot of either of these commonly useful and harmless birds was the signal for a general fusillade by all the guns within range. That which used to be the rare exception has become the rule, and owl and kestrel are spared. It is excellently well that it should be so. Not only are these two birds beautiful and harmless, but both species, generally speaking, are actively useful, doing much good to the farmer by eating insects and small rodents, and some little good to the game-preserver by the destruction of immature rats. But though this is the rule of these species, and their general habit, there are individual exceptions which are very apt to lead to a mischievous misjudgment if it be not clearly understood that such cases are the exceptional ones. Now and then a kestrel will discover (by a kind of unhappy accident, as it appears) that young pheasant chicks and partridges are good, and having made this unlucky discovery will continue to act upon it. He will begin to take the neighbourhood of the coops in the rounds which it is the daily habit of this bird to make searching for his food, and if he finds a small truant unprotected he will do his kidnapping work without any pity. In exactly the same way an owl, forsaking the usual harmless and valuable habits of its kind, will sometimes form a personal habit, all its own, of visiting not only pheasant coops, but also doves, and preying on any unprotected young thing which it may find not sufficiently far grown to protect itself. It is perhaps difficult to say whether a bird ever breaks a habit so

formed, or whether the habit endures for a season only; but it seems more likely that such a habit, once formed, would become permanent. We may perhaps even say that there is a reasonable risk of its being transmitted, by example and by the taste for a delicacy once acquired, to the young of a bird thus individually differing from the type of its kind. There is virtually no doubt of the truth of the fact that these birds do learn to prey in this way on the young of other birds. The writer is not able to speak of his personal experience to its truth, but has been informed of its truth by those who have had first-hand experience of it, and whose testimony is not to be doubted.

The great trouble is that the gamekeeper who falls in with an exceptional case of the kind can hardly, by the most artful persuasion, be convinced that it is really exceptional, and not the common habit of the species. Perhaps the best way to convince him would be to insist upon his making a note of the contents of the crop of every bird of the verminous kind which he kills. If this were done all over the country, we should very quickly have a great addition to our knowledge, and we should find local

variations of habit probably much more important than we suppose. By way of making a start (since nothing of the kind could be of much use unless a central place be established where such notes could be collected and compared), letters on this subject will be gladly received and noted, for the present, if addressed to the "Shooting Editor" at the office of this paper. Besides adding to the general store of our knowledge, it may be said that insistence that the keeper shall examine the crops of birds and stomachs of mammals in order to note their contents is a very useful means towards his own better education. By far the most intelligent keeper of our own acquaintance makes a point of examining his vermin in this way, and has learnt many useful lessons, and some which are rather surprising. It is an examination which takes virtually no time in the making.

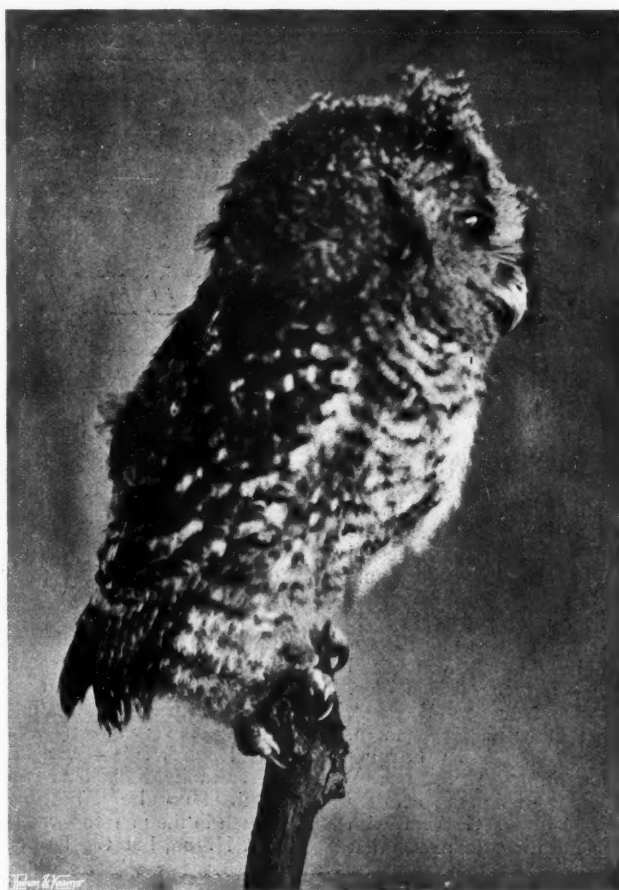
## PIKE AS VERMIN.

IT is to be feared that it would be complimenting the pike rather too highly, or condemning him rather too lightly, if we were to put him into the list of those vermin which only deserve the name occasionally. So far as the destruction of fish-life goes he is vermin "all the time," as they say in America, except when he is himself treated as a game fish for the sake of his own sporting qualities for the angler. And a very game fish indeed he is then, when so regarded. He is

an "occasional vermin," however, from the shooter's point of view, wherever wild duck are reared or valued, for as the young ducks first go sailing off after their mother, like a convoy of little ships under care of a big one, a rush of the fresh-water shark and a snap of carnivorous jaws are often the end of them. It is not very generally known how easily pike may be killed by anyone who is at all a tolerable marksman with a rifle.

## PIKE-SHOOTING WITH THE RIFLE.

A means of killing off pike by shooting them, supplementing the netting, the wiring, the snatching, and all the various means that come under the description of angling, has been, in a certain sense, well known on rivers where it is desired to reduce the pike so that the trout or other fish may thrive there, but the mode of shooting by far the best known is shooting them with a shot-gun; and this is not nearly so effective as shooting them with a rifle. This is a statement that is sure to cause surprise, and likely to cause incredulity at first, if only because it seems that it must be so much more difficult to hit the pike with the rifle than with the shot-gun—and so it is; but what makes all the difference is that whereas you have to hit them, and hit them in a vital part, in order to kill them with the shot-gun, it is not necessary for their destruction that the bullet should actually hit them at all. If it does hit them, so much the better—they are done for at once—but if the bullet goes into the water within an inch or two of them, that is quite enough to stun them. Sometimes it is enough to kill them dead, even though it does not touch them; sometimes it merely makes them come to the surface, and float there in a stunned condition, from which, if left to themselves, they will soon recover; and sometimes it



L. W. Brownell.

NO EVIL-DOER.

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seems to do no more than turn them silly and giddy, so that they go round and round on the same place. For this reason it is well that the rifleman or his attendant should be equipped with a gaff or a net to take the fish out before they recover from their shock. To effect a good concussion it seems necessary that the bullet should be fairly large. A rook rifle is not an adequate weapon. It wants something like a Lee-Metford. Very likely one of the big-bore revolvers would do the work well, if a man were a good enough shot with it; but, of course, it requires much more practice to make fairly accurate shooting with a revolver than with a rifle. The shooting requires to be that, but not much more so. The pike can be killed, or at least knocked so foolish that they can be taken out in a stunned condition, by a bullet striking the water within 3in. or 4in., so it appears, from them, and this gives a fairly large mark. A tolerably good rifle-shot will fail to stun only a very small percentage of those he fires at, firing at distances varying from 15yds. or so to, perhaps,

60yds.—as far, at all events, as he can see the pike. It is necessary, of course, to aim under the fish. The great advantage that this rifle-shooting method has over the shot-gun-shooting, besides the fact that you need not hit the pike with the bullet in order to bag it, whereas you may very likely hit it with a good many of the pellets of the shot charge and still not bag it, is



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PUTTING HIS FOOT IN IT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

that you have no chance at all of killing the pike with the shot-gun unless it is lying very near indeed to the surface, if not actually on the surface; but with the bullet, on the other hand, there seems to be hardly any limit to the depth at which you can kill the pike—at least, the limit of the ordinary human eyesight into the water's depths seems to be sooner reached.

## ON THE GREEN.

### THE INTERNATIONAL MATCH.

**E**VEN the most famous Doctor Johnson, who was not very ready to admit that anything good could come out of Scotland (except the road to England) went so far, in a very gracious mood, as to concede that "much may be made of a Scotchman if he be caught young enough." It is with a reflection of this kind that we of England have consoled ourselves in the international matches, when we have seen Mr. Graham of Hoylake, who learned his game in the school of Mr. Ball and Mr. Hilton (although it is to be confessed in no servile spirit of imitation of either of them, for his is a game which seems to bear its own stamp), hammering some poor compatriot in golf and winning holes for the Scottish side. It used to be our only, and our inadequate, consolation that though he was of Scottish parentage he had been caught young and taught well in England. We have a better consolation now. Against Mr. Graham, by parentage a Scot and taught in England, we can now play Mr. Barry, by parentage an Englishman, but, so far as that most important part of his learning which touches golf is concerned, taught, as I understand, almost wholly in Scotland. It is true that we do not so closely identify Mr. Barry with St. Andrews as Mr. Graham with Hoylake; but that is merely for the rather sentimental reason that

we were accustomed to associate the latter with Hoylake for years before any international match arose with its vexatious questions, whereas that match was well established before we heard much of Mr. Barry. However, we still hope great things for the future; but on this last occasion Mr. Barry did not compensate us for Mr. Graham. Mr. Graham won his match, as he has never failed to win his matches in this international event, but Mr. Barry was beaten by Mr. Aitken, who led him all the way. Mr. Fry, pitted against Mr. Graham, stuck to him finely on the first round, and finished one down only, because Mr. Graham did the last hole in three, which is not quite fair; but in the afternoon Mr. Graham got away from him, and finally won with some ease. Mr. Ball, leading for England, played like his own old self (and that is a good deal to say) against Mr. Maxwell. I have no doubt that he had his teeth set with a very dogged determination to win, for Mr. Maxwell has generally had the better of him in these matches—in fact, has always beaten him, I believe, and revenge is very sweet. We—speaking as one of the selectors of the English side—came in for some sharp criticism for playing Mr. Frank Mitchell as high up in the team as we did; but he justified us nicely, beating Mr. Robb very soundly. A good match in the morning was that between Mr. Cecil Hutchison and Mr. Hilton, but the former had much the better of the afternoon's play. My own match with Mr. Edward Blackwell was a very good and tight one, both playing badly in the morning and well in the afternoon, my opponent winning on the last green. But it is not really fair that a man who can drive as far as he does should be allowed to hole as many long putts in the last half, to say nothing of a stymie or two. But he played a very fine game on a very vile afternoon, for it rained incessantly all the round, and blew hard and cold from the north as well. Mr. Osmund Scott disappointed us of England a little. He was two holes to the good of Mr. Andrew in the morning round, but he let them slip away in the afternoon, and was beaten rather easily. Mr. Laidlay and Mr. De Zoete had a match as close as my own with Mr. Blackwell. Mr. Laidlay was one up going to the last hole, and Mr. De Zoete was beaten by a putt. The last match of all—Mr. Pease and Mr. Simpson—was a good one, all even after sixteen holes played, but Mr. Pease, by winning the seventeenth and eighteenth, standing one up at luncheon-time. In the afternoon,



THE LADIES' GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP: MISS CAMPBELL DRIVING.



however, the fortunes of this, as of several other matches, were reversed, to the advantage of the Scot.

And so Scotland won, as she has a way of winning, from us poor Englishmen in her national game. Perhaps we ought not to grudge her the victories—she has been very kind in giving us golf at all; we ought not to expect her to give us pre-eminence in it over her, the giver. It does seem just a little hard, though, that we should have taught one of her sons to hammer us year after year. Still, it is the fortune of war. It is hard to say how we could have strengthened our side by choosing other than we did. Even after the event it is not easy to see how a better side could have been picked. There are very many who had claims, but had to be left out because you cannot put twelve or thirteen into a team of nine. It has been suggested that the sides should be enlarged. But if you enlarged them to twelve each you would find fifteen claimants for places; there would always be more than we could fit in nicely. In such an imperfect world as we are placed in we must do the best with what we have. It is only just to say that the Scottish selectors are in a case quite as hard, and possibly even a little harder. There are very many whom it is difficult not to put into the team, and yet for whom it is impossible to turn any out. "Taking one consideration with another," a selector's life is not a happy one.

#### WONDERFUL PLAY OF THE LADIES AT BURNHAM.

IT seems very much the reverse of gallant to discuss the ladies' championship in type at all less conspicuous than that in which the international work of the men has been set out, but space is like the bed of Procrustes. Some of the work



MISS THOMPSON PUTTING IN THE FINAL

of the ladies was so very conspicuous that it cannot fail to attract notice even if printed in the smallest of type. It is not of the championship itself so much that I speak as of the scores in a competition preceding it. Miss May Hezlet went round the Burnham course (which I do not know intimately, but know in a general way that it is of great big features, requiring really strong golf) in the wonderful score of 77. I am presuming that the tees were not stretched to their fullest; but still this score, on a rough day, and with another lady, after a bad outgoing, coming home in 36 in the same competition, suggests that the idea of ladies competing in the men's amateur championship is not outside the horizon of practical politics. These are very many scores. Miss Gower not many years ago won the championship of croquet from all the men. Golf, to be sure (and let us say it gratefully, is not croquet; but still, stranger things have been seen than a lady golfer going well in the championship open to all amateurs.

#### THE LADIES' CHAMPIONSHIP.

Doubtless in the ladies' championship play itself the golf was no less good; but score play was not then the business of the moment. Manifestly Miss May Hezlet did not keep her form, especially in the second half of the first championship heat, and especially in the putting part of the game. Miss Hilda Evans of Weston-super-Mare, who may probably be credited with some advantage in local knowledge, beat her at the nineteenth hole. Miss Evans did not survive long after a victory so signal, for the very next round saw her downfall. In the afternoon of the same day Miss Florence Hezlet, after being three down at the turn to Mrs. Walker Leigh, played a very brilliant homecoming game, and won by 3 and 2. On the following day, however, Miss Hezlet, though leading halfway, found Mrs. Kennion on the top of her game in the latter half, and was beaten by her by several holes. This was a win which really foreshadowed Mrs. Kennion's ultimate victory in the final, and when she had also beaten Miss Dorothy Campbell, who has had distinctly hard lines in these competitions in running up to the final and semi-final stages, and yet just missing the championship, she had, perhaps, done

her hardest work. Playing with all the confidence which the defeat of these two redoubtable rivals must have inspired, she had a relatively easy win from Miss Thompson in the final. Mrs. Kennion, the new lady champion, used to play as Miss Stowe at Hoylake, and no one who knew her name then can be at all surprised by the consistently fine form that she showed all through this tournament.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

#### LEGISLATORS AT PLAY.

THE new Parliament, both Peers and Commoners, coincides with its predecessors during the last sixteen years in the belief that it does good to the mind sometimes to have a little play. The string of the bow is apt to snap at an inconvenient or dangerous moment should the tension be too severe or too long sustained; and hence the new House of Commons, more greedy of sustained and serious legislative labour than any of its predecessors, had a sporting interlude by betaking themselves last Saturday in a fairly large body to the breezy links of Littlestone. The play in the opening rounds of this year's Parliamentary Tournament is, indeed, a revelation of the growing improvement of the standard of play among our busy legislators. When Unionism was overwhelmed at the last election, and Radicalism rode triumphant on the crest of the popular wave, there were many who predicted in their hasty zeal that the Government supporters would be too seriously wedded to public duty to think of the frivolous pastime of hunting the errant white ball in tangled bent and wind-swept sand-dune. The Liberal majority meant, it was said, the extinction of the annual Parliamentary golf tournament. But this is far from being the case. There were 110 entries this year, and this number shows not only the popularity of the match, but is a fair indication of how the level of what might be called the golfing education of men immersed in high public affairs is steadily growing. Another fact which this year's tournament reveals is that the standard of general play is rapidly rising. That noteworthy element is probably explained by the fact that at the public schools, and certainly at the Universities, golf is more encouraged as a pastime among scholars and undergraduates than ever before. The golfer at the University is no longer looked upon as a weird eccentricity in the way of outdoor sport, the butt of good-humoured raillery among his athletic-loving companions. The University is the portal in the majority of instances, even in a Democratic Parliament, leading to the House of Commons; and hence the new members have come equipped with a sound playing knowledge of the game, and, in very many instances, with admirably correct styles.

The new House has been deprived this year of good golfers like Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, Sir H. Seton-Karr, and Mr. Guy Pym; but on Saturday there were three members playing in a strong field behind scratch. Mr. C. E. Hambro owes 4, Mr. H. W. Forster owes 3, and Mr. F. H. Newnes owes 2, while there is a thick cluster of low handicap players with single figures. With the fresh south-west wind blowing at Littlestone on Saturday the majority of the players realised how true in a golfing sense it is that "it has so pleased the gods that Sorrow should attend as companion on Pleasure"—notably in the long carry off the tee at the seventeenth hole. This bunker was the grave of many vivid hopes of a close struggle for victory. In justification of the excellence of the handicapping, it may be said that five matches in the first, and four in the second, round were decided by one hole only. Several matches were also carried to the nineteenth green before a result was declared, and Mr. Herbert Gladstone had to play twenty holes before beating the tough and tenacious Mr. Lough. One of these interesting tie matches was that in which Mr. Balfour played Sir John Dickson-Poynder. Mr. Balfour was in excellent health and spirits, but his long game was not so steady as it usually is. Conceding his opponent seven strokes, Mr. Balfour got into many more bunkers than was either prudent or desirable, but all his recoveries were good. At the last hole Sir J. Dickson-Poynder had a short putt to win the match, but he missed it. At the nineteenth hole Mr. Balfour had to concede his opponent a stroke—a piece of handicapping justice which the late Prime Minister was disposed laughingly to dispute. When, however, the inexorable rule of the committee was pointed out to him that the players had to continue the match, he jocularly threatened them with a vote of censure. Both tee shots were fozzled, and Mr. Balfour's (the first bad tee shot in the round) had a bit of a slice on it as well. He forgot in his next daring shot the sage advice of *inter utrumque tene*—

keep the middle course between extremes—for he tried to reach the green with his cleek, instead of being content with getting to the hole side in a steady 3. He got into the ditch in front of the green and lifted, a misfortune that overtook his next shot. Eventually he allowed his opponent to play one off two. Sir J. Dickson-Poynder finally secured the match very easily without the use of the stroke which Mr. Balfour had to concede.

#### NEW COURSE AT WEYMOUTH.

THE new eighteen-hole course of the Weymouth, Dorchester, and County Golf Club was formally opened last week in presence of a large gathering of golfers and their friends. The holes are laid out on Came Down, where formerly there existed a nine-hole course belonging to the Dorchester Golf Club, which is now absorbed in the larger undertaking. The Down forms part of the estate of the Earl of Portarlington, and a company was formed, with a capital of £1,500, with Mr. R. C. Watts as chairman of the directors, to carry out the extension of the course. Taylor, in laying out the course, has utilised the whins and other natural features to give interest to the play. The course stands high, and from the majority of the holes a very fine and extensive view of the surrounding country can be obtained, including Dorchester on the north, and Weymouth, Portland, and West Bay on the south. The holes vary in length from 130yds. to 540yds. There are seven holes ranging between 400yds. and 500yds. A handsomely-furnished bungalow club-house has been erected at a cost of £750. After the



AN M.P. AT LITTLESTONE.

opening ceremony, in the presence of a large number of spectators, Braid and Taylor afterwards played an exhibition match, the play being followed by a large crowd. Taylor won the round by two holes.

After the match a public luncheon was given, Mr. R. C. Watts presiding, among those present being the Mayors and Town Clerks of Dorchester and Weymouth, and Mr. J. Gundry, the captain of the club. The trend of the speeches at the luncheon was to show that Weymouth and Dorchester would benefit greatly in prosperity by the provision of the links in attracting the best class visitors to the neighbourhood, for as the Mayor of Dorchester took great pride in saying, "search where they would throughout England, they would not find any spot where the air was purer, more invigorating, or more exhilarating than on these links. They had the purest of air wafted from the hills and dales of Dorset, mixed with stronger breezes which came from the sea, making together a mixture which was almost unequalled in England." Taylor, in acknowledging the toast of his health, proposed by the chairman, said that "he did not claim superhuman genius, but everything connected with the course was plain sailing. He had expressed the opinion, and he would maintain it, that it was one of the finest golf courses he had ever seen. His friend Braid, who knew very nearly as much about it as he did, would bear him out." There were loud cries for "Braid," and the shy and modest Open Champion, in response, said "he could only congratulate them on having such a magnificent course. It was absolutely first-class. He believed that after a little playing on it would be one of the finest inland courses he had ever played on." A. J. ROBERTSON.

## A PHANTOM FISH.

WE had been fishing for a week, friend B. and I. The water was in very fair order; there was a reasonable stock of fish; and by "fish" I mean salmon. The rent we were paying was a very tangible thing indeed, yet sport was downright bad. One discoloured fish of about 11lb. and a couple of grilse were all we had to show for six days' hard labour. It was a very weary and discontented couple that sat down to dinner one evening to discuss our food, past failures, and future prospects. However, a glass or two of excellent port, followed by irreproachable coffee and a good cigar, had their inevitable effect, and the future already seemed brighter, so much so, indeed, that on B's. showing signs of breaking into poetry, I felt it my duty "as a friend" to pack him off to bed, particularly as we had arranged to try down our best pool (a long and heavy stream) before our nine o'clock breakfast. I had barely got between the sheets, as it seemed to me, before I heard the welcome call to rise and be up and doing once more. A very short space of time found me on the river bank, rod in hand, and eager for the (improbable) fray. My one ambition was to kill a fish of over 40lb. in weight; several times I had been near it; in fact, in mentioning the weights to my friends, I may have claimed success; but a man lieth not unto himself, and my soul knew that a liberal 38½lb. was the true tally. However, 40-pounders do exist, and why (some day) should I not get one? The fly on the cast was changed to a large-sized Silver Grey, and I went to the head of the pool to start work, wondering all the time where friend B. had betaken himself. Past want of success had induced a certain carelessness, and I had no real expectation of a fish. The first 60yds. of the pool fully bore me out. But then! what a change came o'er the spirit of my dream! A huge form surged upwards from the side of a big, flat boulder, grabbed the fly, and quietly sank out of sight with it sticking fast in his jaw. The size of the fish filled me with amazement; never had I seen such a specimen, even on a fishmonger's slab in London town!

"What is it?" said Andra the gillie; "it canna be a saumon!" and his ruddy cheeks were as pale with excitement as was physically possible.

However, a salmon it was, as he very soon let me know, and undoubtedly the father of all his kind. It was an appreciable quarter of a minute ere the fish grasped the fact that the slight prick of the fly was anything beyond a passing inconvenience. But what a glorious beast he was when he did rouse. Up and down, backwards and forwards, now boring in the deeper waters at the foot of the pool, now showing all his superb proportions, as he forced himself through the heavy stream on to the shallows at its head, whilst I, with parched lips and perspiring brow, followed him, dog-like, up and down the bank.

My arms ached, my sight dimmed, and though I was weary with the weariness of death, I still would not have given up the rod for a king's ransom. Was it never going to end? Would he never give in? Was I fated to lose him after all? The thought wrung my brow with anguish. But surely the last run or two was not so determined; surely that was a gleam of his side that caught my eye as he turned the last time?

Yes, see there! he rolled clean over. Time and a steady pressure were telling their inevitable tale; and man's skill once more bid fair to triumph over the brute creation. Not that the fight was over, the victory won; much water ran by, and many times was my heart in my mouth ere Andra got a chance with the gaff, and how ridiculously small it looked for the job. After a final spurt to the head of the pool, he turned, and I tumbled him down, over and over in the heavy current, gradually bringing him nearer to the bank. Andra, pale with excitement, but determined, followed along the bank. A quick stroke, the gaff went home, a half draw, half lift, and the mighty fish was on the bank with Andra on the top of him, like a hen on eggs. A vigorous application of the "priest," and victory (hurrah!) was with the rod.

We solemnly shook hands and drank his health in the biggest nip of whisky I ever took on the bank of a river. At least, I suppose it was whisky; it *said* so on the bottle. I had a spring balance that would weigh 50lb., and the fish took it down with a bang.

"Take it up to the house, Andra, and we will weigh it on the stable scales."

No sooner said than done, I following behind like a mourner at a funeral. The ½cwt. was put on, and still the fish was master.

"Give him another 10lb., Andra, and let us know the worst."

The weight was thrown on with a bang, when, whirr-r-r-a-a-a!—and I awoke, to find the alarm clock doing its worst, and to hear B's voice at the door—"Get up, you lazy beggar, it's eight o'clock, and we shall not have time to try that run before breakfast."

I shall never know the weight of that fish!

LIME PARK.